COMMUNICATION ROUNDTABLE TRANSCRIPTION

Matthew: Erika, this in interesting. You said you haven't been in a relationship yet, right? You're 29. You feel like there's something holding you back. Do you have an idea of what it is?

Attendee: I think it's a fear of rejection and the fear that I'm not good enough. I've slowly been trying to conquer the different aspects of my life. I went to the Retreat down in Tampa, and I addressed it in work. Now I've gotten to the point where some of the girls get together up here but I'm too focused on work so that I don't have to face the social aspect with rejection that I'm preventing myself from having…

Matthew: Which part of the rejection is most scary?

Attendee: What do you mean?

Matthew: Very often, when we're afraid of rejection, we picture some part of it. I'll give you an example. I was with Jameson one day, and we were in a restaurant. I think it was a Chipotle – a restaurant! I was not looking my best. I had a backwards cap on, I had my hoodie on, I had shorts on. This was in the middle of winter, but I'd just come out of the gym. I'm sitting there, eating, and I was like, "Dude, come meet me to eat and we'll go and film afterwards."

These three people walk in, two women and a guy, and one of these two women is really attractive. Jameson saw me looking over and joked, "You hungry?"

I said, "Shut up! I'm fine."

They sat down, and we sat at this table. I looked over and looked at Jameson, and my immediate thought was, "I want to go over there. I really want to speak to this person, but I'm also scared of the potential rejection." There are three of them, and who knows what

the dynamic is? I felt myself already beginning to make excuses.

I said to Jameson, “Is he with either of those two women? I don’t want to offend anyone.”

He looked over and said, “No, definitely not.”

I said, “Okay. Does he look like he’s in love with either of them? If he’s in love with one of them, I don’t want to go in and be that guy. He’s been hitting on her for the last two years, and now I come along.”

He said, “No. I don’t think so.”

I can feel myself trying to find a reason not to. We sat there, and I’m eating, and it kind of ruins my lunch because I can’t think of my lunch because I really want to go over there and talk to this person, but I’m now in this analysis mode. At the end of our food, we get up, and I can feel myself prolonging us leaving because I want to do something, but I haven’t done anything. I’m getting frustrated with myself because I’m thinking, “We really have to go. We have work to do. This is the middle of the day. And we are also going to start to look weird here if we don’t leave.”

We’re about to leave and as we’re walking out the door, I said to Jameson, “I have to go back. I’m going to hate myself tonight if I don’t do something.” I walked back and I said, “I’m really sorry to interrupt, but I have to ask. Are you single?” looking at this one lady.

She looked up with her mouth half-full of burrito – I’d chosen a really romantic moment to do this – and she said, “I am.”

I said, “Well, that’s great news because you’re very pretty. I wanted to talk to you. Do you want to exchange numbers? Maybe we can get together sometime, and if you don’t turn out to crazy and I don’t turn out to crazy, we’ll see what happens.”

She laughed, and they laughed. By the way, in that moment, when you say, “If you don’t turn out to be crazy,” it’s almost like you’re introducing a bit more of a cool factor to yourself, because what you’re saying is, “I acknowledge that we don’t know each other at all. Right now, you might think I’m the crazy guy who has come right up

to you out of nowhere in Chipotle. Well, maybe you're the one who will turn out to be the nightmare." That's what I'm saying with a joke.

I said, "If you don't turn out to be crazy and I don't turn out to be crazy, maybe we could do something."

She said, "Okay."

She took my phone and she put her number in. I take my phone back. I feel really good at this moment. I'm relieved. I didn't get rejected. This wasn't an embarrassing moment. By the way, I've been plenty of those situations where that didn't go well. I'll tell you all about them if you'd like.

I walk out, puffy-chested, feeling good. Jameson and I get to the end of the street. I look down and I can't see her number in my phone. I look at Jameson and say, "Wait. I canceled the number." She had put her number in, but didn't press "save," and I just canceled the screen.

I'm at the end of the street now. He gave me this look like, "Well, you win some, you lose some."

I knew exactly what he was thinking. I looked back at him and said, "I have to go back. I cannot go home. I have to go back."

He said, "Dude, no. You're not going back."

I said, "I have to. I won't be able to sleep tonight if I don't take that risk." I said, "You're coming with me."

I walked back in there. They see me come in from outside. I walked down the steps to the table. I looked at her and said, "This is really embarrassing. I canceled your number when I got outside." The friend next to her started laughing at me – just plain laughing at me. "I canceled your number, and I had to come back. I would have regretted it if I didn't. You're going to have to put it in again. I'm so sorry."

I stood there while she put it in again. I looked at her friends, this guy and this girl, and I said, "This is not the smooth start I'd hoped for in this thing." They started laughing. I got her number, and as

I was walking away I looked back and said, "I promise you I won't come back a third time."

I literally can still feel that feeling that I had when I was sitting at the other table and thinking, "Should I or shouldn't I in this moment?" That's a rejection that feels very real to me in that moment. By the way, the rejection to me in my head looks like me going over there, he's pissed off because there's something going on, I've annoyed him, these two women feel really awkward, barely anyone says a word, and then I have to walk away at that point in a really awkward state. In my head, that's what happened.

I'm interested in what part of the rejection scares you the most and what it looks like to you. It may not even relate to that part of the process. It may relate to a relationship or intimacy. That's why I'm interested.

Attendee: The approach also stresses me out, as well as the fear of them thinking I'm not good enough. "They're too fit or they're too good-looking for me." It really gets to me. Then I'll go on the date, and the end of night is also anxiety for me.

I had an experience that set me back, which was online dating. Someone says they like you, and you think, "Oh, great. I'll reach out." I reached out, and I got a comment back that was very derogatory. "Who do you think you are talking to me about running?" and stuff like that. It was the rejection fulfilled.

Matthew: What was that? Tell me about that scenario?

Attendee: It was a guy who liked running. He was training for the marathon. I said, "How's training going?"

He said, "How do you think you could connect with me talking about running? You don't look like you could even run half a block. Maybe you should stick to something you know."

I was very confused because it was a mutual like. I was just making conversation about stuff that interested you. I didn't say I ran. I just said, "How's your training going?" You hear that, and you're like, "Uh, okay."

Matthew: Of course, what it does is it can give you the impression that that's what people would say to you if they were being honest.

Attendee: It was really funny because his profile was all about being charitable and helping people, and I thought, "You son of a bitch. What the hell is going on? I'm so confused." It makes me retract back, because it's someone pointing out your flaws out loud, even though it's through a computer screen.

I've moved on from it. Somehow I moved on from it, but…

Matthew: It's really hard.

Attendee: Yes.

Matthew: For me, what gets tough is that there is an anonymity online and people will say things that (A) they would never say to you if they were with you – they wouldn't dare – but (B) it seems like honesty and feels like honesty, but in real life, they don't necessarily think that thing. It happens all the time.

On Tinder, somebody will literally be like, "No, no, no, no, no, no." They're looking for this person who is this model of beauty or whatever. Then if you watched the way they are a bar that night, it doesn't correspond in any way with the way they are on that app, because when they go to a bar and a woman who doesn't in any way look like that will look over at him and gives him a little look, and he thinks, "I really want to talk to her. She's cute." He starts talking to her and depending on how the interaction goes, he may fall head over heels for that person, and guaranteed on Tinder he would have said, "No," because it's not real.

The danger of course is that we take a comment like that and internalize it. On my YouTube channel, people will say everything. People will say, "Man, it must make you feel really good when you read your comments because there are all these people saying how good-looking you are."

Actually, no, because you get every type of comment telling you what's wrong, as well. I still have to read, "Matt, you look a lot skinnier these days." "You're looking a lot less manly. I really wish you would go

back to the gym and put on the weight again." You're thinking, "Wait a minute. What? I didn't even think of that." Then you start thinking, "Maybe I do need to go back to the gym. What happened?" You look at yourself and think, "Oh God."

Someone will say, "Matt, I was watching your video from three years ago and your hairline is receding faster than I thought it would. You should really think about…" I'm thinking, "What the fuck? I hadn't even thought of that until you said it, and now it's in my head." Whatever it is, people will always say it.

That's something I can absolutely relate to and relate to how difficult that is when it happens. Of course, the key is contextualizing it. That's the key to dealing with it.

Let's be real about something. This guy sounds like an absolute dick of the highest order. Let's get that out of the way. Anyone who feels the need to do anything like that is someone whose opinion we shouldn't even trust, actually, not just someone whose opinion we shouldn't care about. It's not trustworthy, either.

Attendee: It sounds like one of those online trolls.

Matthew: Exactly. The more I've begun to learn about attraction over the years, the more I've come to understand just how little it has to do with a lot of the things that obsess about. We'll talk more about that today, but I want to keep going with this line of questioning for the moment.

So that knocked you a little bit at the time, right? And there's a bit of overhang from that that you're still dealing with.

Attendee: Yes.

Matthew: What else? You mentioned that at the end of the date, there's some anxiety. Where does that come from at the end of a date?

Attendee: More embarrassing stories.

Matthew: Please, I love them. I can give you just as many. I promise.

Attendee: At the end of a date once upon a time – I think it was three or four years – he came and he wouldn't end it. It was a good sign. We were sitting and talking, but we're sitting in the car. My car is right next to his, and I'm like, "All right. It's time to go." It starts to rain. Then I go in for the handshake because he just took too long and I thought, "All right. I'm leaving if you're not pulling the trigger." I went in for the handshake, but he went in for the kiss, and I ended up kissing the side of his face. Then he tried to go back to rectify the situation and I said, "Oh, no. I can't recover from this right now."

Matthew: What did you do? You didn't kiss him?

Attendee: No.

Matthew: What did you do instead?

Attendee: Well, I kissed the side of his face.

Matthew: But he went in to try to kiss you and you did what? You pulled back or you said, "Oh, no!"

Attendee: Yeah. I said, "Oh, no!"

Matthew: Oh, you did.

Attendee: Yes. I was like, "I'm still reeling from the fact that I just made out with the side of your face."

Matthew: You didn't say that, though. Or you did?

Attendee: No, I did.

Matthew: Okay. What did he do next?

Attendee: He tried to shrug it off. I don't know. Have you ever seen that movie *Just Friends*, with the guy sitting in the car saying, "Stupid! Stupid! Stupid!" I thought he had pulled away and I was doing that. He honked, chuckled, and said, "I'll talk to you later." He never actually talked to me again.

Matthew: We're going to rewind a little. I want to start with this lingering thing, and then I want to move on to your reaction to that.

The lingering thing is really interesting. Why is it that at the end of the date guys linger?

Attendee: They want to get sex.

Attendee: They can't do the closure part. They can do the intro and the middle, but they can't bring it to a close.

Matthew: They can't bring it to a close. Is the close always sex?

Attendee: No.

Matthew: Not necessarily, right?

Attendee: It's on their mind.

Matthew: By the way, it is the case that women are also really awkward with the closing part?

Attendee: Yeah, because traditionally it's always the man's role.

Matthew: Right. The only reason we don't see that a lot of women are awkward with the closing part because they don't have to do anything. So it's easy for a woman to say, "He didn't do anything," because they're waiting for the guy to do something.

It's not true that the guys is always trying to get sex at that moment. It may be true that 99 times out of 100, he'd say yes given the chance, but that's not the same as him saying, "I'm trying to get sex tonight."

Ironically, it's usually the guys who don't know what they're doing who will try to get sex that night. It's an interesting thing. There are different classes of guys. There is one guy who has no idea what he's doing at the end of a date. Even though perhaps he might like it to go somewhere, he doesn't know how to do that, so he gives up on that idea before it has even started. "I'm not even trying for that. That's voodoo stuff – someone who can take a woman home on the first date."

Then there's the type of guy who is brash and really outgoing and doesn't care about the reaction. He's just going to try it on, no matter

what. He's going to try to take you home regardless, and he's also not going to be that personal about if it doesn't happen. "Well, I tried."

Then there's the type of guy who is really insecure and needs it to happen to feel good about himself, because if he goes home and nothing happens, he feels hurt by it. He's the guy who, when he tries and you reject him, gets upset. He either gets frustrated, gets angry, or gets pissy. You can feel it. He's not happy.

Very often, by the way, it's good to get that sign from him early on. One of the reasons I say you probably shouldn't have sex with a guy on the first night is not because I think relationships can't work if you have sex on the first night, because I know many relationships with people who have been together long-term who had sex immediately. It's not that it can't work, but it's usually an interesting thing to put someone through a delay and see how they react. It will often tell you a lot about a person that you'll never learn if you don't put them through a delay.

We can discuss ways to do that. In fact, I'd love to do that. Of course, it's very easy to delay a guy in a way that actually wrecks the connection. Here's a really important thing. I speak to a lot of woman who are very strong women but they are also quite brash about the way they deal with things. If you said, "Be careful about how you delay a guy," they'd say, "What do you mean? If I don't want to have sex, then I'm not going to have sex." Okay. But that energy is the reason no one wants to meet up again. That energy is why you're single right now, because no one wants that energy.

I'm going to really give you the honest guy's perspective here today, because it's important for us to understand each other and not judge each other. The really tough thing for guys – I'm talking about the majority of good, decent people, not the assholes who will treat you badly at the end of the night – is that the majority of us are really confused by the contradictory ideas, or what seem sometimes on the surface to be contradictory – they're not actually on a deeper level.

On one hand, women are complaining that we're not being forthright at the end of the day. I'm lingering and they're annoyed about it, but the reason I'm lingering is because I don't want to get in trouble and

she judges me for having desire and for wanting her because, by the way, I'm not on a date with her because I'm not attracted; I'm on a date with her because I'm attracted in the first place, and I have to delicately balance this thing of being respectful and a gentleman, and also being the guy who goes for it, which women routinely talk about liking. "I like guys who are bold. I like guys who know what they want. I like guys who are decisive."

Well, the last time I was decisive, she called me a creep. So how do I navigate this? That's the tough part, especially for men who were brought up to be gentlemen or ever so slightly old-school, or even if not old-school, just respectful. You'll find that sometimes there appears to be a divide between guys who are respectful and guys who are completely disrespectful and don't care.

That gets confusing. It's not just about, "Let me just delay him, however I have to do that." There is a way to do this in a way that doesn't scare him off and builds the connection.

This is the confusion that people go through at the end of a date, and it's really tough. For me, I've been a lot of dates and still there can be those moments at the end of a date where I'm not sure exactly what I'm supposed to do here in this moment.

Why is that? In a way, this is the really interesting question. What is it about a date that has someone lingering by the end of it? If we answer that question, we actually can bring power back to you, because you can't control whether a guy lingers – that's up to him – but you can influence whether he lingers. By the way, this is going to be a big feature of today. You can't control men but you can influence them, in the same way I can't control you but I can influence you.

What do you think in a date would make a guy linger by the end of it?

Attendee: Body language.

Matthew: What type of body language?

Attendee: Positive body language, like positive touch, leaning forward when you're talking.

Matthew: What would be the thing that would make him linger if you weren't doing those things?

Attendee: I guess just positive discussion and indications that you want to see him again.

Matthew: Those things would mean he wouldn't linger.

Attendee: Really?

Matthew: If he's unsure about the connection between the two of you…

Attendee: I think he would end it. I think he wouldn't need to linger. I feel like the lingering happens when he's getting the positive, at least for me.

Matthew: But you might also linger if you weren't sure if you liked me. If I was on a date with you and I wasn't sure if you liked me, that's when I'd really linger. I remember being on a date with someone I had talked to in a bar the week before.

Here's the evolution of this little interaction. We're in a bar. She walked past me. I started talking to her, and we exchanged numbers. By text message, I told her that I thought she was beautiful somewhere in the first few messages. She sent me a smiley face. By the way, immediately I say she's beautiful and she sends me a smiley face: that's one of those moments where I'm not sure.

Attendee: As a woman, when you get a compliment like that, what are you supposed to say that doesn't make you sound cocky – "I know" – besides "thank you"? Thank you seems so congealed and so trite. It sometime goes back to online dating because people will give you a compliment – I know it's happened to me and I feel myself blushing – saying, "You're really attractive," and you don't know what else to say, so sometimes it's just easier to use emoji – "High five" – because what else are you supposed to say that will still convey interest without arrogance?

Matthew: Here's the important part of what you just said. At the end you asked the right question: "How do I convey interest?" To me,

you asking, "How do I convey interest without arrogance?" seems to be a non sequitur, because what you need to do is convey interest in this moment. Now what you're worried about how to accept this compliment gracefully. I would say that that's the part of the question that doesn't matter. He's not all that worried about how you accept his compliment. He's worried about whether you feel the same way. That's what he's thinking.

So when I say she's beautiful and she sends me a smiley face, I know that she's happy that I called her beautiful. I don't need to be an expert to know that. What I don't know is if she's attracted to me. I know she gave me her number. You may think, "Well, that means I'm attracted to him," but actually, most guys have learned that that doesn't necessarily mean that you're attracted. It might mean you're bad at saying no, which many women are. Often you get someone's number and you're not really sure if they feel desire for you in the way you feel for them.

What if I said, "I had to come up to you. You're very beautiful," and she said, "Thank you," and sent a blushing emoji, for example – emojis exist now; we have to deal with that world – but then sent, "You're not so bad yourself," with a wink? Hearing "You're not so bad yourself" and her winking at the same time makes me think, "Oh, okay. There's at least this hint of the fact that she feels desire for me."

By the way, there are two types of women in this scenario. There's one type of woman who when you say she's beautiful, says, "That's so sweet. Thank you." That doesn't necessarily feel bad, and it's not a killer. It can be a little tough because you're not really sure what that means. Clearly she's a very sweet person. She's saying, "That's so sweet. Thank you." You know she's gracious. That's all she's really told you. But I still have no idea what this means for our connection.

Attendee: Can't you combine the two?

Matthew: Of course. You could say, "That's so sweet. Thank you. You're not so bad yourself." By the way, she doesn't have to come back and say, "I thought you were incredibly handsome when I saw you." But just that hint of "You're not so bad yourself" is enough for me to feel like I should keep going. Does that make sense?

Attendee: Yes. I'm only internalizing because I've had the experience where I've done that and said, "Thank you. You're not so bad yourself," with a winky face, or something along those lines, and I've gotten, "You felt compelled to say so," or I've gotten, "Uh, I'm okay" or "Nah. I'm all right."

Matthew: Both of those guys sound really insecure. There's a woman I know who does this really well. She's really cute with it, but it works. If you say to her, "You have really beautiful eyes," she'll look at you and say, "Thank you. Yours are nice, too." It's a sweet moment. I don't stand there and think, "She just said that because I said it," or whatever. I just think this is someone who (a) knows how to accept a compliment, and (b) knows how to flirt back a little bit.

I wouldn't worry about the guy who said you felt the compelled, and the guy who said, "I'm okay," it's just about the ugliest thing anyone can say.

Attendee: That was someone who I was dating. His nickname for me was "Gorgeous." I'd say, "I saw you today. You look really cute today." He'd say, "Nah, I'm all right."

Matthew: I've had people do that and it drives me up the wall. It throws it back in your face, and if someone inundates you with that message enough, you can be forgiven for questioning it yourself. Someone can actually make you doubt how attractive they are without how much they question themselves.

I've heard it said in many a relationship where someone actually says to their partner, "Why do you date me? Why would you love me? How could you want to be with me?" I think it's slightly disingenuous, by the way, because they don't always mean it. Sometimes people say that as a way of thinking they're being sweet – I'm saying, "You're so amazing. Why would you want me?" They don't necessarily believe it whole-heartedly. Sometimes they do, but very often people are saying it as a way of trying to make you feel good, but the mistake is in thinking that I have to denigrate myself in order to do that. I can still accept whole-heartedly your compliment, be graceful about it, and then say something about you.

By the way, you don't even have to compliment him back. This is the interesting part. Let's say, for example, we didn't want to make him immediately feel like we were coming back with a compliment, because we thought, "It might be a little more genuine if later on today I say something, or next week I say something."

Even if he said, "You're beautiful," and you sent a message back saying, "That made me blush," you've managed to do both things in the same sentence. You've both communicated graciousness and a sense of desire at the same time, because it's not that often we blush unless we feel that the opinion of the person saying it matters.

If we don't care about the person who says it, we don't generally blush. If a really sleazy guy came up to you and said, "You're so beautiful," you wouldn't blush.

Attendee: No. I was just thinking, "Yeah, that happens." You don't want the compliment. You feel uncomfortable. I'm very clear that I'm not going to be complimenting back. I just say thank you in a very neutral way to convey I'm not interested.

Matthew: Of course. And we should add the caveat that we're talking about guys you like here.

Attendee: Saying that should make it more clear. I should say something back to convey interest if I'm really interested.

Matthew: If I'm interested, I need to do something. By the way, people do what they're validated for. If you validate someone for doing something, they want to do that more. When a guy calls you beautiful, you want him to feel good in that moment for saying it.

I would argue – and I'm right – that if instead of saying, "That's so sweet," you said, "You just made me blush in front of my friends," or "My friends are all wondering why I'm blushing now." Oh God, that's good. I've never said that before, but that's really good.

"My friends are all wondering why I'm blushing now." If you say that, it does all of the right things. You're sweet, you're not overly forward, he's felt this validation of being able to have some sort of impact on

you with what he says, and he's even feeling really great right now because you talked about being in the company of your friends while it happened.

To keep going with this narrative, I had said, "She's beautiful," and she had sent me a smiley face. I'm not sure where we are here. As it happens, we end up going on a date. At no point on this date, apart from being on the date, did I get any clear sign that she was into me.

I know she talked to me enthusiastically. I got that much. It wasn't as if we were walking and she wasn't saying anything. We were having a great conversation. But by the end of the date, I really didn't know "Does she see me as a cool friend or does she see me as something more than this?" I knew she was interested in me as a person – I knew that – but that was all I knew at this stage.

At the end of the date, I walked her to her car, I gave her a kiss on the cheek, and she left. I now know, looking back, that she was wondering, "Is he going to kiss me?" I didn't feel I had any right to kiss this woman in this moment because I had not gotten anything. It felt like it would have been from 0 to 100 out of nowhere.

Here are some of the things that might have helped me. If there was a little touch here and there, that would have established some connection on the date that wasn't just about "Oh, we're now friends." There are certain types of touch. If I said something and she grazed my arm or she had said something and put her arm on me when we were sitting down like that for just a second or two, that would have helped me.

It's the subtlest things. If we were sitting together at a bar and we were pointed in to each other and our legs were touching and she didn't feel the need to immediately move her leg away, that would have given me a subtle hint. Because when we're comfortable with someone, even to some extent with friends… When you're sitting next to friend in the car, in the back seat and your legs are up next to each other, you don't feel the need to move your leg. If you don't know this person and you feel your leg touching, you move your leg just an inch so they're not touching any more.

So if on this date our legs were touching and she didn't try to move it, I would think, "Okay, this is a good sign." It doesn't tell me everything, but it's a good sign. Maybe we in person have that moment where I say something and she starts blushing or she says, "You're going to make me blush." That would be another moment. If she gave me a compliment based on some sort of desire, that would help me immensely.

Let's go to this guy at the end of this date, because I was that guy. This was me at the end of this date. I didn't know what to do in this moment. You said he went in to kiss you?

Attendee: Yes.

Matthew: So he did one better than me. Let's just rewind a second. What could you have done? What could you do that, in that moment, might give a guy a hint that you're okay with him kissing you?

To give you one example, I remember being on a date where about three-quarters of the way in – we were sat across the table from each other – she looked at me and said, "You're so far away," and she brought her chair around to my side and came and sat on the same side of the table as me. As soon as she said that, I thought, "Thank God. We're on the same page. You're there with me." That was a moment where I got a little hint that it might be okay. That's one example.

What are other examples? What could you do to give a guy a hint that maybe it's okay to kiss you?

Matthew: Here's a question. Does eye contact change in those moments?

Attendee: Yes.

Matthew: In what way?

Attendee: I can't describe it. You just feel it.

Attendee: It's the way things slow down…

Matthew: So firstly, you slow down. People who aren't comfortable with this moment don't allow things to slow down. One person might be slowing things down, and the other person says, "I just thought of this funny thing that happened the other day," and they change the whole pace of the situation.

In that moment, it's like you're allowing things to go just into half-speed. The more uncomfortable of the two will change speed in an effort to not have an awkward moment, because we're all terrified of the awkward moment where we're just looking at each other and no one is saying anything. None of us like that. Sometimes someone will rush in to fill the silence or say something, but you have to let things go at half-speed. Speed is one thing that changes.

In terms of your eye contact, where you look also can change. You may find yourself allowing someone to notice you looking at their lips. That's a big difference. When we're having a normal conversation, we're just talking like this, we're making eye contact. When things slow down, I might be listening to you and allow you to catch me looking at your lips as you're talking, and I might be okay with the fact that you for a moment catch me not really listening to what you're saying.

You'll be talking to me, and as you're talking, I'm nodding along, nodding along, and looking at your lips. I look up, and if you say, "Are you listening to me?" I'd say, "Sorry, I was a little distracted. You're going to have to say that part again." You would now say that part again, but you would know that I'm now being playful and ever-so-slightly sexual without saying it.

I might be talking to you and halfway through a sentence, I might say, "You're very pretty, by the way. I'm sorry. I keep noticing. What was I saying? Yes, basketball," and I might keep talking, but what I've done is I've taken you out of this moment for a second.

Attendee: That's where it happens. Right there. That's where everything gets a little flirty and awkward and that's when he leans in for the kiss.

Matthew: That's when it happens, but what you can do more effectively is build to that moment so that there is not so much ambiguity, you can feel it building to that place. It may be in that moment where I say, "You're very pretty, by the way. I'm sorry. I keep noticing. Where was I? Oh yes," and then I keeping going, but for the next ten seconds while I'm talking I have that cheeky smile on my face like I know I said something a little cheeky. You registered that, but I kept going, so while I'm talking to you, that's now in your head taking shape. It's slowly feeding in a little bit of tension, a little bit of tension, a little bit of tension the whole time.

By the way, even if you're here, this is a big gap at that moment to try to bridge that. For a guy, it's a big gap to lean in and for someone give you a cheek in that moment. Our worst nightmare is that happening.

Here's how messed up this is. You wanted to. You wanted to and still in that moment your reflex was to give him the cheek, so now he has no idea what's happening. He even tried to rectify it, God bless him, and that didn't work, so he's now left really questioning that moment.

When a guy is looking at your lips and you wanted to edge him closer, you could say to him, "What are you thinking?" What's he going to say? He may say what he's thinking, or he may more likely say, "Nothing," to which you might either respond with, "It doesn't look like nothing," which is you're way of saying, "I know what you're thinking. I may be there with you," or you could be more on-the-nose about it and say, "I might be thinking the same thing."

In that moment where you gave him the cheek, you could have just changed that by being upfront in that moment and saying, "I kind of wanted you to kiss me then. I just didn't expect it."

Attendee: I did say that. It was the whole awkward ball.

Matthew: But what if it wasn't awkward? What if you said, "I kind of wanted you to kiss me then. I just wasn't ready for it. I think you should try again"?

Attendee: That's what he said. He said, "Try again."

Matthew: And you said, "No," which is a shame because he didn't accept the awkwardness. But you said, "No, I'm going to stay in this awkwardness now and not let us out of it," which wasn't necessary, because you knew he was already coming to kiss you. In other words, you knew at that stage he wasn't coming to reject you.

Were you afraid of what might come afterwards?

Attendee: Yes.

Matthew: Tell me about that.

Attendee: Thinking, "What if it wasn't a good kiss?" or "What if I miss again?" I got more in my mind than trying to give him another chance. I just started going through scenarios in my head and self-sabotaged.

Matthew: What would you do differently this time?

Attendee: I would have gone for the second chance.

Matthew: Do you think you will next time?

Attendee: Yes, because I learned from that, and like you said, the option for rejection was already gone. It was basically an open-door situation.

Matthew: Were you worried that the kiss might lead to something else, that it might go further down that road of intimacy in that moment, and that scared you?

Attendee: Yes.

Matthew: I want to come back to his. Don't let me forget to come back to this because this is really interesting.

Let's keep going round for a moment. What's something you feel you really want to talk about?

Attendee: How do you navigate flirting in the workplace? If you work long hours, it's the main place you meet people, and you

see it happen all the time. Say for instance there's this one guy at work who I talk to and all the usual indicators are there that he might like me, too. There's touch, there's flirting conversation, eye contact, and all of that. Yet nothing ever happens beyond casual workplace interaction.

How do you really navigate that? I feel like that's a real minefield. Should you avoid it altogether?

Matthew: There are two issues here. One is your job. That part is up to you: how much will this affect my work life if this doesn't go well? Dating across at the same level as you has the potential to create a lot of awkwardness. Dating above you has to the potential to cost you your career. Dating below you has the chance to kill people's respect.

The mistake I see a lot of people make is when they date someone higher than them in an organization or who has some authority. It can be short-sighted because that person has the potential to really screw things up for you if they decide that they now feel awkward or uncomfortable. I see that a lot. It often can be very seductive when someone is in a higher position of power, but the moment it goes wrong, it affects you much more than it affects them. That being said, you're big enough and intelligent enough to know that situation.

In terms of what to do, is this someone you have to interact with every day?

Attendee: Yeah.

Matthew: You're with them every day. Does it concern you if it goes wrong what you'll have to go through in terms of that awkwardness each day, or do you think, "I'll get over it. It's no big deal"?

Attendee: I feel like I would get over it because it doesn't really bother me, but I can't speak for…

Matthew: So if it didn't go the way you wanted it to, you're happy with the consequences of that.

Attendee: Yes.

Matthew: You see this guy every day. Is there sexual energy or chemistry right now?

Attendee: Yeah.

Matthew: Describe it to me. Where does it come from? What are the moments where you feel it?

Attendee: When you're having conversation and you're doing some flirting and teasing and there's that weird tension and sexual energy. It's a weird tension. I don't know how to…

Matthew: That's a pretty good description of it. What has happened so far? Have you ever hooked up with him?

Attendee: No.

Matthew: Have you ever been out with him?

Attendee: We go to Happy Hour as a group, but never beyond that.

Matthew: Have you ever hinted that you would be open to doing something beyond that?

Attendee: I think so, but then again maybe I…

Matthew: What did you do?

Attendee: I've hinted. There was a mutual movie that we both liked and maybe we should go see it, but nothing ever really came to fruition. I'm very old-fashioned. I don't ever outright ask anybody. I've been in a few relationships and I interact with enough men that I've never felt that I really needed to be the one who makes the move, so that's hard for me. It's a new place for me.

Matthew: Do you ever make clear to him that you find him attractive?

Attendee: Not directly. I've never said, "I fancy you. I really like your hair. I really like the whole face."

Matthew: As opposed to half? It's important. You don't want to all in love with half a face. There is where there might be a slight

disconnect, because without asking someone out… I agree with you; there's no need to ask a guy out on a date because if you give him enough hints, he'll be able to do that for himself. I would potentially argue that anyone who, with enough hints, can't ask you on a date themselves might not be a great person to marry anyway. How are they ever going to pay their bills and do normal things that human beings do?

But there may be a disconnect right now if he's still left wondering, "Does she find me sexually attractive?" By the way, you're going to see this as a recurring theme, because it's something that over the years I've seen… Women miss an awful lot on this part.

I have to be careful here because this isn't the same thing as running around calling every guy sexy. That can very easily get into the territory of looking like you're too forward and it's not special and there's no nuance. But I often find that in an effort to avoid that, women go too far the other way, in the same way that many men in an effort to maintain their status as a gentlemen go too soft.

Now you have a guy who's looking across to you from the bar who really wants to talk to you but doesn't because he doesn't want to offend or tread on any toes or anything like that. So what started as the desire to be liked and be a gentleman actually ends up being a little too complacent and a little too afraid.

It's important that he feels some of that energy from you. That may even be just in a moment where he's wearing a certain suit that you haven't seen him wear before, or a nice pair of shoes, or he's done his hair a certain way, and you say, "You look kind of hot today." You just slip that in there. You're not going to say it 100 times. You just slip it in there. "Wow, you're looking kind of hot today."

This is a random scenario, but you'll get the point. If you happened to see him in the gym and you said, "I saw you working out today. I'm not going to lie. It was kind of hot," that's a moment where he gets this clear impression that, "Wow, this woman feels some desire towards me."

He now has everything he needs to ask you on a date. Okay, you could go one step further and say, "We should make time to do something sometime," which is a nice way to phrase it, as if we're both busy individuals. I would have to make time as well. It puts you both on an equal footing. "We're both busy, but we should make time to do something sometime."

"It may be a bad idea. I don't know, but I'm sure it would be fun" is also a fun line to say for a guy. Especially with you working together – I say this tentatively – there is a dynamic you can play on there if you want to go a little Dark Side with it. There's a dynamic that you can play on there, where it's not supposed to happen, it's probably a bad idea.

"We should probably never see each other outside of the workplace. In fact, let's definitely never see each other outside of the workplace. That would be a terrible idea. Fun, but a terrible idea." If you say that to someone, oh my God, they'll say, "I want to see you tonight and the weekend." You're putting this idea that it's a bad idea in the best possible way. It requires confidence, but if you could say something like that to a guy, you're playing on this dynamic of "This is somehow inappropriate and we definitely shouldn't do it. This is a bad idea."

The same works in reverse when you're talking to a woman, of course. If it's a guy, you stress that something is a bad idea. You could send me a picture of you in your pajamas – completely not sexy pajamas. I could still create tension here because if you send me a picture of you in your pajamas and I sent you a message back saying, "You're actually hot in those pajamas. You cannot send me any more of those pictures. That's trouble. No more. I'm putting you on a picture ban," that's a far better strategy for me to get you to send me more pictures than saying, "Please send me more pictures."

If I said, "Please send me more pictures. You're so hot," you might say, "Okay. Here's one more." But if I said, "I'm putting you on a picture ban. Do not send me any more pictures. It's too much. I'm with friends right now and I can't be getting flustered while I'm with friends," you'd be "Send, send, send, send."

It's funny the way our minds work, but when you make something like "No, we shouldn't," it creates more of that fun and that little bit of drama in a good way than "We really like each other. We should go out sometime."

Attendee: How awkward and terrible is that?

Matthew: Yes, but that's the path that most people go down because in their seriousness about liking someone, they forget their playfulness. This is something that happens to all of us.

I didn't learn this until later on. My biggest mistake growing up was thinking that it was enough that I liked someone. "I like you": that should be enough. No. No one cares that you like them. That's not enough. They need to feel that it's fun, that there's some playfulness to it, that you're going to be entertaining, or that there's some danger or something, but not "I really like you." No. That's not what makes people like us.

We often forget to be playful and at times silly and mischievous with the people we like. Ironically, we're very quick to do it with people we feel completely comfortable with, where we feel that there's no danger. Where there's no risk, all of a sudden, we start getting playful, we fuck around with people – "Go away. Don't talk to me." If you see a friend or someone playful, "Go away. Don't even talk to me. Go get me a coffee. I don't want to talk to you right now," all of a sudden you find out, out of nowhere, that this friend really likes you. Guess why? Because in those moments you were hot, because you were playful and you were silly and you messed around with them. But you did that because you felt comfortable.

Then as soon we decide we like someone… Have you ever had this? You were so cool with someone, you could interact with them, you could have fun with them, you could poke fun at them, you could tease them, you did all the right things, you were touchy-feely with them, and then one day you realized you liked them as more than that – "Oh, I like this person" – and all of a sudden, your whole demeanor changes around this person. You stop doing all the things that got them attracted to you and start immediately getting awkward. Then

you wonder, "Why's there now this weird thing between us." Because we got weird. We stopped being our normal, playful, fun selves.

Those are just a couple of things that you can do with this guy. It's very important that you also go out and you really create choice.

Attendee: It's not one of those situations where I like this one guy and there are no other guys. I date and I see other people. It's just one of those things that's lingering and you wonder…

Matthew: Yeah, absolutely. By the way, give attention to other people in the office, as well. That's really important. Have fun and play around with other people, not always at the exact same level or tone that you do with him, but certainly sometimes close to it, because that also creates that vibe for him of "Am I right about this? Am I not?" It creates a bit of a challenge there. Don't be afraid to be fun and playful with other people on the office floor at the same time.

Create choice, because choice is the great antidote to those feelings of… When we get weird around one person, it comes from a scarcity mindset where we think, "It has to work with this person because I really like them." You constantly have to train yourself out of this scarcity mindset because it's incredible how quickly it will come back.

I walk into a coffee shop, I see someone, I think they're really attractive, and all of a sudden, my brain says, "This is the only woman in the world." "Wait. This is madness. There is one of these in every coffee shop across this city, and this is just one city," and that says nothing of the tea shops or the book shops or the clothing stores. They're everywhere. Make no mistake. Whenever your brain is trying to trick you into thinking that this person in this room is the only person, it is a farce. Don't let it happen. It's this thing our brain does.

By the way, it's a good thing our brain does it because when it is working with someone, it's the thing that allows us to really fall in love and bond with this person and ultimately marry them. I'm not saying there's nothing special about the person you marry. Of course there is. There's something incredibly special, and there's something

incredibly special about that bond that you build with that person, which actually is more special.

People don't give that enough credit. They give far too much credit to the "love at first sight" thing, and not nearly enough credit to the connection that is built with somebody. To me, that's the really special part, because that's like a unique castle that you build together. I think that's really beautiful.

It's not to say that the person you end up with isn't special, but there are many special people in life for many different reasons. It's one of the reasons we can have so many heroes, because there is not one hero in the world. There are so many wonderful people to look up to and to want to meet.

Choices are very important. It's important that we go out and meet interesting people and we have fun with those people. I'm not talking about sleeping with them but just having a great time. It suddenly frees us up. Any time in my life where I've created choice, it has freed me up to take risks with the person I really want, knowing that my world isn't over if this person doesn't want me, that there are actually all these great people out there, as well, who soften the blow when it happens.

Let's keep going round for a minute.

Attendee: I have a whole bunch of questions, but one question is really glaring that I've really been wanting to ask you for a long time. I walk with a cane. I've been walking with a cane for a really long time. I've been going out on dates for a while. Since Impact and doing the Retreat and all of this stuff, I am such a different person, and I thank you 100% for that.

However, because of just my whole being surrounding it has changed and me just going out is different surrounding it, I feel I am different about it. I am going out and meeting people. Like what you just suggested, I am going up and asking guys out and doing things I've never done before, but I just feel that men are so turned off by the fact that I walk with a cane. I don't know what it is.

Of course, everyone who loves me and my friends think I'm crazy, but I know what happens when I walk in and I see them see me. It's something that I have to deal with. I've been wanting to ask you for so long, and now, I have the opportunity to ask you.

Matthew: By the way, the reason your friends can say this and it doesn't resonate with you is because you're not stupid.

Attendee: They also know me. They said, "Once they get to know you…" and I get that – it's all superficial and all that.

Matthew: But it's still difficult in the beginning when you have to actually deal with the reflex responses of people. Really, what you're talking about here is people's reflex responses to things. Let's just make that distinction first.

I want to just ground this day by going through the attraction formula briefly so that we have this, because it's actually going to be relevant to the whole day and give us structure. There is a difference between the reflex response of somebody to something that we have or are, and the either measured response of them or the response that grows out of attraction. There's a big difference between the two.

When your friends say, "Well, when they get to know you…," they are right, but it's an oversimplification. Everyone has something – I don't care who you are – whether it's a crutch, whether it's a feature on your face, whether it's a type of hair, whether it's a style choice, whether it's your height, whether it's your weight, or whatever. Everyone has something that creates a reflex response in a certain group of people.

By the way, it doesn't create it in everybody. The mistake is sometimes in over-generalizing. We do have a tendency to over-generalize and say, "Everyone thinks this when they first see me." Actually, that's not true, either. Not everyone thinks that when they see you. But there's a group of people who do. Of course. We're not stupid here. Let's not bullshit each other. There are some people who do. No problem. The beauty of course of a reflex response is that it is just that from those people. It's a reflex response to something that they see right now when they first see us.

Very interesting things happen as we spend time around people. It's not just about them getting to know us on a deep level. Even on a superficial level, the way that someone sees us move, the way they see us react to situations, the way they see us talk, has a massive impact on how we're seen. You can see someone and your reflex response might be that their age matters to you, and immediately that strikes you. "God, this person is too young or too old for me." Then you spend a little time with them and it completely reverses an association that you have.

I have had this happen for me in so many different ways in my life. I don't just know this to be true from observation; I know it to be true from experience. There are people of an age who I didn't think I would date who I actually spent time with and thought, "Oh my God, this woman is unbelievably sexy. I can't stay away from this person." There are people from a race that I didn't identify with being attracted to, and all of a sudden, I spend time with that person and I think, "Oh my God. I didn't know if I was attracted to that person. Of course, I am! This person is amazing. I can't get enough of this person." Then it opens up my whole world that way.

There are so many different ways in which our reflex response isn't nearly as important as we give it credit for, and other people's reflex responses aren't nearly as important as we give them credit for.

This is true not just on a social level, but this is true in my business. Do you know how many people want to fucking hate me the moment I show up on TV? They turn on the *Today* show and there are Kathie Lee and Hoda, two more mature ladies, sitting next to me, and they see me, and I look 15 years old to a lot of people. They'll look at me, and the hate comments come immediately.

Kathie Lee and Hoda might post a link on their Facebook, saying, "We're here with Matthew Hussey." Somebody will see a picture of me and the hate begins. "He looks like my child. What does this guy have to say about love? What does this guy have to say about relationships? What a joke!" People write this stuff, immediate hate.

I could take that and I could say, "I have another ten years before people are going to take me seriously. I'm going to lay low for a while

and then come back out when I have a few more gray hairs, and then maybe people will listen." Or I could say, "What are some of the ways that I can overcome this reflex response?"

Part of it is to do with practically what I do, and part of it is to do with my mindset. I'll give you the mindset first. There was a woman on my Retreat, maybe ten Retreats ago. She came to me on – I think – day four. For those of you who haven't been, it's five days. On day four, she came to me. This woman was one of the more chirpy women in the whole program. She was so happy, she was always in a good mood, she had such a great energy about her, but she came to me and started by saying, "I'm really struggling with something." These were her words: "But I don't think you're built for what I'm going to say."

You can imagine me. There's no issue anyone's ever said to me that's made me blush, and I've heard some weird and wonderful things and some truly awful things that could make anyone cry. I said, "Well, I'd prefer if you left that up to me to decide. But you're welcome to tell me."

She agonized over whether to tell me, whether to tell me, whether to tell me, and then finally she sat down with me and told me the story of how she had been in a car accident. Her mom and dad were in the car. They crashed. Both of her parents died in the car crash. She survived but had to have a leg amputated.

What I didn't realize until this day – because she had been wearing clothes that had masked it – was that she was wearing a prosthetic limb. She showed me, and she looked at me and she burst out crying. She said, "Every time I go on a date, I'm always terrified of the moment when I have to tell this person that I'm missing a leg." She's crying and crying and crying. She said, "I'm so worried that someone will not like me for it, that someone will decide that they don't want to be with someone who has a prosthetic leg."

I could tell that anyone she'd ever spoken to her in her life had given her a certain reaction to this. I looked at her. I kind of smiled, and I said, "Just how arrogant are you?"

She said, "What do you mean?"

I said, “Not everyone has to like you. You can’t go out there dating and expect every guy to want what you have. Not everyone is going to like you. Jesus, stop being so fucking arrogant all the time.”

I said this to her and this woman hysterically began laughing. She couldn’t breathe she was laughing so much. As the minutes went on, she just laughed and laughed and laughed and laughed as. As she looked at me, I started laughing. Now we’re both sitting there in this private room cracking up to each other, and she has tears running down here face where she’s laughing so much.

She looked at me and said, “I never thought of it like that. Why do I need everyone to be attracted to me?”

I said, “You don’t. The whole world doesn’t have to be attracted to you. It’s quite possible that you just have this person you want to spend the rest of your life with think you’re a goddess. Would you rather a thousand randoms think you’re attractive or one guy who you’re going to spend the rest of your life with think you’re a goddess? Which is more important you?”

“The guy.”

“Of course. So why are you worrying about the thousands? Why are you trying to get everyone to like you? Stop.”

The quickest way to mediocrity is trying to have everyone like you. I don’t care whether it’s a prosthetic leg or a crutch or that you think you don’t have the face, or whatever it is. Walking into a room and trying to get everyone to be attracted to you is the quickest way to be boring, because we try then to chameleonize ourselves to whoever our audience is so that they will like us.

If you’re doing things right – this has nothing to do with whatever we think our affliction is – a lot of people should find you unattractive, a lot of people should not be attracted to you, a lot of people should say, “This person is not for me at all.” Usually when we find someone who’s too attractive to too many people, it usually means that they’re not authentic. It usually means they’re not real, because your style, the way you are, the way you live, should turn off a lot of people.

How many friends do you really have where you can say, “You and I get each other. We can hang”? How often do you find that? That’s not easy. The reason it’s not easy is because you’re particular and they’re particular and it’s hard to find people who really connect with who you are and understand your outlook on life and want to be part of that. Why is it any different for a partner, and why do we treat rejection differently in this area? Why when it comes to this area the rejection of someone is such a big deal?

The interesting thing is we don’t think of it like this. Most of us say, “No, it’s not that I need everyone to be attracted to me.” Well, saying, “I don’t want to get rejected,” is saying the same thing. We don’t think of them as the same thing, but saying, “I don’t want to be rejected” is the same as saying, “I need everyone to want me.”

When you’re out there, I want your first mindset shift to be this: get Zen with the fact that a bunch of people don’t want you – a whole bunch. Then get real about the fact that (a) a whole group of people will want you instantly, crutch or no crutch, and (b) the reflex response is a very superficial response to a situation, and that once they begin to see – I’m not talking about, “Once they see how generous you are…” and “Once they see how kind you are…”; of course they’ll see all of that, but even closer than that – your general attitude and demeanor and your sense of life and fun and energy, even then, many people will think, “Eh.”

To give you a very real example, a friend of mine has busted some part of her leg. I forget which part, but she has been on two crutches now for the last twelve months. We have been out in New York. It’s really interesting to me. Recently, we went out to Tao. We went to the restaurant and then we went up the bar at Tao, and she’s hobbling through the bar on these two crutches. Then we went to the club in Tao, and she’s going down the stairs on these two crutches. I can see there are certain guys who will look at her and think, “She came on her crutches?” But she doesn’t give a fuck. This girl does not care. I watched her and I thought, “This is a lesson right now. This person doesn’t care.”

The next time I saw her, she has this Italian boyfriend who she's now in a serious relationship with. He came out to the club with us. He's helping out with her crutches as she's going around the club. Everyone's having a good time. She can't dance because of her leg, but she's sitting on the seats at the side, perched on the top, dancing while we were all dancing around her.

I realized, "Wow. This really doesn't matter to her. Because it doesn't matter to her, it also doesn't matter to him." It was a very powerful thing for me to watch, to see someone wear that in such a strong way.

Whenever someone has something, I always am empathetic of how it must be to go through life like that. I think that all the time. I don't think any of can be so arrogant as to assume we know what it must be like when – forget you and your crutch – you see someone walk down the street and they're a burn victim with half of their face completely distorted as a result.

I look at that person and I'm humbled, because I think they have to deal with the reflex response of every human being who walks past them having an initial reaction to the way they look, to their aesthetic. It has nothing to do with what's going on in here, it has nothing to do with the life they've lived; it's purely an aesthetic. I'm always humbled by it.

I don't pretend to know how tough that must be for somebody to figure out mentally "How do I deal with this going through life?" But I know people do because I see it everywhere, and I see what it does for the level of attraction that they get from other human beings. The most powerful thing about it is the attraction you do get from overcoming it is a lot stronger than the normal level of attraction that other people experience, because it's earned.

When someone sees someone and thinks, "They have something," and they say, "Hey, you're beautiful," or whatever, it really is nothing. Until we get to know each other a little better, it means nothing. And you know it means nothing – by the way – because I can feel it again two minutes from now for somebody else. That's superficial. But the attraction we're talking about is earned, and that kind of earned

attraction is the only thing that long-term relationships are actually built on. That's how they last. It's because of that earned attraction.

I want you to know that the greatest commodity that you have for a meaningful relationship has been completely untouched. The most valuable assets you have are still there and untouched. The least valuable thing you have, the one that is the most superficial, the most transient, the one that will be lost more quickly than any other thing, is the one that you're concerned about.

That's the confidence and the mindset. The second thing is the competence. Now when I go and talk to people, what needs to happen to make sure that people really focus on the right things?

Attendee: But that's what I'm saying. Since I've done those things with you, I don't care about that. You've really helped me. That's just the bottom line. It's just completely different. Asking this question beforehand? You're right, the confidence is completely different. But I wouldn't have even approached a guy beforehand. Now I just walk up to them, I have no feeling, I'm just standing there, I approach them, it doesn't matter to me. I feel as though they look at me thinking, "Is she kidding me?" But I feel very comfortable standing there and doing what I say, and I say the things that you say to say. I just feel like their reaction to me is not the same reaction as other people's.

Matthew: Now I want you to focus on getting comfortable with playing a bit more with the situation. Right now, you have given yourself the courage to go and do things, but I want you to almost be more playful about the situation.

This applies everywhere for all of us, in every sense.

Attendee: I just have to say, because you were mentioning the cane, that I just had a fractured foot and I actually had to be on one of those frigging knee scooters. I was on that for six weeks, and my first instinct was to just sit and home and avoid this, but my friends dragged me out. I actually went out to bars in this. At first, it was totally embarrassing, but I ended up getting asked out on more dates

when I was on this frigging scooter thing than I did just walking normally. It's exactly like what you were saying. Everything you were just saying ended up happening, but in the beginning my mindset was, "I can't go anywhere because who's going to want to talk to me?"

Matthew: Was there a way that you found was useful to get playful with it?

Attendee: That's what I had to get to. I was scootering around in the subway. I had no choice but to basically be laughing at it because it was so absurd. "Hey, VIP coming through!" I was happy when I got to cane because it meant I could actually be more mobile.

Matthew: That's an interesting line. "VIP coming through!" That's funny.

Attendee: Totally. Actually, people cleared out of the way. I just started using it and it'd get me great seats at the bar. People would say, "Hey, I want to try that," and I'd say, "No. Maybe if you're good," that sort of thing. But in the beginning, I thought nobody was going to frigging talk to me. I have to say it really was exactly what you were saying. It's all about the attitude. Before that, I was going out all the time and not meeting anybody at all. I was actually sad to give it up, because I had no choice but to talk to people. "Yeah, I'm rocking a scooter." I had no choice. It was a good conversation starter.

Attendee: She just said the thing. She's giving it up, and your friend who is walking with crutches is giving it up. This is something that I'm not giving up. You just said it right there – not to dwell on it any more – I'm not giving it up. That's really what it is. I would love to be able to give it up.

Matthew: But if I said to you now, "I'm taking away both of your legs…"

Attendee: What you just told me, I wrote it down. "How arrogant are you, Mindy?"

Matthew: I'm glad.

Attendee: When I'm done, I'm going to highlight it. I'm serious. I understand the story. I believe 100%. I see that. I understand that completely by you sharing that story. I'm grateful 100%.

Matthew: I love that.

Attendee: I don't want to steal your thunder, but I feel a connection. I want to know how you broach things you can't change because I have a child. I'm a single mom. Everybody can sit there and say, "They have to love you and then love him." Now you're talking about trying to be on a date. When do you broach it? How do you broach it? I don't have anything superficial – not to do diminish you or anything – but then it's something else that's behind the scenes. Yes, everybody has baggage.

When you go out on a date with somebody, it's like it's a disease. "No, you're not going to get pregnant." They will push back a drink in my face and say, "Yeah I don't do kids," or, "I don't want to be a father figure," and I've had to flat-out say sometimes, "Nobody asked you. Nobody asked you to be his father." I have a situation.

How do you then get past that first reflex when it's something you cannot change?

Matthew: Well, you have baggage. What makes it any worse than any of the other baggage that all of us have?

Attendee: Because I feel that if you want to be with me, then you also have to accept not only me but another person, another human being.

Matthew: After a certain point, maybe. Do I have to do that on the first date?

Attendee: No.

Matthew: Do I even have to do it on the third date?

Attendee: No.

Matthew: So then actually it only becomes more meaningful in that sense past a certain point. I had a girlfriend whose dog I hated. Initially she said, "You have to love my dog if you're with me."

I said, "No I don't. I hate your dog. It drives me crazy. It's always there. I can always hear the dog. It's always barking. But look, you have a dog. That's your decision. It wasn't my decision to get a dog. You have dog. But by the way, I really want to be with you, so don't worry about your dog for now in terms of me really liking your dog. Let's just have a great time."

By the way, I ended up loving the dog like crazy. I will cry when this dog dies. I really ended up loving the dog, but in the beginning, she actually did the opposite of you. She put pressure on me to make this dog meaningful to me.

Attendee: I tell anybody that I've just gotten out of a long-term relationship. "My son has nothing to do with you. You won't even meet him until I know you're going to be around."

Matthew: I think that's a really healthy place to start from. I think you're already ahead of the curve in the way that you think about that. Of course, you have to be incredibly protective of your son. But that's a different thing than asking someone else to make that meaningful to them.

Past a certain point, what you know is that if this person is going to turn out to be the right person, the right person is going to make the situation meaningful to them. The one who actually gets through, the one who ends up spending time with you and your son, the one who ends up really being in a committed relationship with you is the person who will not only respect that situation but fall in love with it, which is, of course, not only possible but probable. It happens all the time across the world.

But let's put it on the fucking table. Let's get real. If you have a kid, the pool of guys who will want you will go like this. It doesn't go like; it goes like this. If you said to me, "I have a religion that says I can't have sex before marriage. I'm worried it's going to turn guys away,"

I'd say, "You're fucking right. Of course, it's going to turn guys away!" Your pool just went from this to this.

I had a woman at my dad's event. She got really angry with this. She was in London, and she said, "I'm in the adult entertainment industry. I'm worried that guys will have a problem with it."

My dad said, "A lot of guys will. You have a smaller pool of guys because you're in the adult entertainment industry."

She said, "Whoa. How dare you?"

He said, "It's the truth. I can lie if you want me to. But the reality is that some guys will have an issue with this. It doesn't mean all guys will."

This is just life. There are so many different factors that come into play in making our pool of people smaller, and it does happen to all of us. The single moms who I've worked with who have done the best, they generally make two decisions. Firstly, they make a decision to be at peace with the fact that they don't need to win over the world of men who are petrified of that scenario, that there will be a certain type of guy who that's like kryptonite to and who get nervous about it for their own stuff, and that they don't have to make it their business to win over those guys. There are other guys who won't mind.

Let's even be more specific. There will be guys who don't mind, and there will be guys who initially are scared by it but actually, when it comes down to it, will make an emotional decision to be with you, not one that's based on the logic that they feel, because what men want emotionally and logically are completely different things.

If you ask a guy, for example, "Do you want to be with someone who's a single mom or someone who's never had a child?" There will be many men who say, "I don't care," but there will be a type of guy who says, "I don't want to date a single mom." He may be answering from logic right now, but it doesn't make any difference to who he falls in love with.

That's where the game completely changes. That's why online dating is so unrepresentative of real life. What we would put in our shopping basket logically is not the same thing as what we want to eat or what we end up eating. We'll say, "No, I want this and this and this and this. That's what I should want." But then when it comes down to it, the person we fall in love with is the person we fall in love with. It makes no difference. To talk about the exact type of person in their scenario who we want to fall in love with becomes redundant.

There's that great moment in the movie *Up in the Air* where the younger woman is talking to George Clooney and that great actress, the older lady whose name I forget. They're sitting together and both George Clooney and this woman are of a different age group than the woman in front of her.

This young girl was crying because her boyfriend just broke up with her, and she goes on this rant about she wants. She says, "I want a guy who drives this type of truck and the only thing he loves more than me is his golden lab. He's sweet. He works but he's also the type who can throw a football on the weekends." She goes through this big list.

She then looks at the woman in front of her and says, "What do you want?" She thinks about it and says, "Someone who has a nice smile, some hair maybe, but even that's not a deal-breaker. It's important that they come from a good family. That's about it." The girl in front of her looks at her and says, "God, that's depressing."

But the reality is that when people grow up, they let go of a lot of the logical prerequisites they have for a relationship, for a situation. As we become more weathered, which we all do – as we get exposed to more things and we've been through more shit and we accumulate more things, more issues, more people or whatever it may be – we realize that life isn't quite as simple.

There will always be the type of guy who tries to oversimplify a situation, who looks at you and says, "No, this doesn't fit into my simple idea of what it is I want." You may not fit into a simple idea of what it is someone wants, but let's not pretend someone without a kid does, either; they just seem simpler on the surface. Then you get to know them and all their fucked-up ways and what they're like

and you realize, “This person might as well have ten kids for how complicated they are.

There are guys who want a simplified version of things. But I don’t think the guy you want to marry, anyway, is the guy who is still of a mindset where he wants the simplified version of everything, because the people who tend to not hold up well in relationships, regardless, are the people who need everything in a neat little box the way they initially wanted it to be.

You know when you’re dating someone and they tell you something about themselves that you have to take a moment with? I’ve been through it in the past – so many different things. I’m already in love with them, so I’m fucked, then they’ll tell me something that stops me for a moment and I think, “I have to deal with this. I have to figure this one out.” In that moment, as a guy, my reaction might be to feel like I want to distance myself.

What she does in this moment is everything. It will define the relationship. How does she react in this moment? This is far from being a bad example. This was a fairly common one. I remember I was at an age where it meant something more to me than it would today, but I remember being deeply in love with someone. We were having a conversation and she brought up that she’d had an abortion. In religious terms, that’s not any issue for me, but because I cared about his person, I hated the idea that something had happened or that she had to go through that or that her body had been affected in that way. I found it really, really difficult.

Here’s the funny thing. She had already gotten over this a long time ago. She had dealt with this issue in her life, and she had actually had a truly hard time when it happened because there were people who she knew who disapproved immensely and made life incredibly difficult for her at the time. What was really fascinating about this was my response was to be hurt by the situation – as if I had any right to be, but I was.

She carried on talking about the situation, saying, “It was a really hard time in my life because there were people who disapproved and made life very difficult for me, but I knew it was something that was

really important for me to do at that age. I knew it was something I had to do. It was important to my life that I did it, and I had to resist what people close to me were telling me in order to be strong enough to do this. I know it was a big decision, and I don't take it likely, but it was a stage of my life that made me really strong."

It was like the pressure got let out of this situation because all that happened was I become more attracted to her. I suddenly became much more attracted to this person, and to this day, I still love this person. I'm still searching for people in life who have been through situations that have weathered them in the same way. I want weathered people. Give me someone who's weathered and has been through it any day over someone who comes to me having never been through anything. I'd always rather that person because that's so interesting to me, and that person has something to teach me.

What I don't want is for someone to show up on my doorstep who hasn't gotten over all of those things. I don't want to be in a relationship and have to play therapist. I want to be in a relationship and exchange war stories. "Here's what I've done and here's what you've done. Wow. God, look what we've come through, and look at what we get to now come through together and do together." That makes me far more attracted to someone.

I know that there are people who will be even more attracted to you for the way that you deal with that situation than if it didn't exist. It's not "Could they be attracted to me in spite of my situation?" That's the wrong question. You want to look for someone who is even more drawn to you because of how strong you are and because of what you have built with your son and because of what you have created. You want someone who's more attracted to you because of that, not someone who's just simply attracted in spite of that.

That's the thing that's really powerful. I think finding someone who will love you in spite of is setting your standards too low. That's setting the bar way too low. Don't ever punish a guy for his initial reaction, because we all have those. Everyone in this room has reacted to something in a way that they look back on and think, "Shame on me. I shouldn't have reacted that way." I have done the same.

There are situations that I think back on and think, “God, how childish I was in the way I reacted to that moment.” I want to draw something for you in a moment because it’s going to be interesting for you to see this. The way they reacted to my reaction got me more attracted than I could ever be without it happening. That was why.

I don’t say this for effect. For this person who had been through that in her life, I was actually more attracted. I feel this even as I say it now. I’m more attracted to this person because they’ve been through that. It was not that I learned to deal with it and learned to just love her in spite of that moment in her life. No. It sounds like a weird thing to say, but it somehow made me even more attracted that she’d been through that and that she was the person she was today as a result, and it made me love her even more than I otherwise would have done.

That is the type of man that you want, and that guy is hard to find with or without a child. Even if you didn’t have a child, it still isn’t easy to find that guy. Your problem is not the child that you have; the problem is finding a guy like that. It’s very different. That’s a struggle that every woman can relate to. Even if not in your situation, every woman can relate to that.

It’s encouraging because it makes you realize that, like how guys react to you on your crutch, it’s addressing the wrong issue. It’s like me running a seminar and being upset that the whole world didn’t come to my seminar. I don’t need the whole world. I want a group of people who are the right people to come to my event. I don’t want the whole world to come. I make people apply for my Retreat because I don’t want the whole world to come. I don’t want to spend five days with anyone and everyone. I don’t like people that much. I want the right people. I want people who I enjoy spending time with.

It really is irrelevant how many guys don’t want you because of your child. To focus on that is to focus on the completely wrong problem.

Let’s keep going on for a moment. Was that helpful? Good.

Attendee: Yeah. I didn’t mean to steal away from Mindy’s thunder.

Matthew: No. This is perfect. You guys are perfect. I do want to show you something on the board real quick. Before we move on, check this out, because it relates to what we were just talking about. Let's say that this is you and this is him. What we're talking about here when we have our hang-ups and things we're worried about is we're worried about he is going to see me and have a reaction. Let's say I am going to approach this guy. A. That's action A. I approach him. I'm really worried about his reaction to me. That's B.

This is what I'm worried about: if I do A, he's going to feel B. If I approach him and then tell him action A, that I have a kid, I'm worried about his reaction to that. If I approach him, A, and he sees my crutch, he sees that I have to walk on a crutch, he's going to have a reaction to it. We're worried about B. We don't want to do A because we're worried about B.

What I was trying to get across there in talking to you about that story is A and B are the least important parts of the process. The most important part of the process is once you feel his reaction B – which nine times out of ten is simply a reflex response – what is your reaction to that? A, B, and C.

C is by far in a way the most important part of the process. In other words, the most important part is your reaction to his reaction, not his reaction in the first place. People's initial reactions are not all that important.

I was at a bar the night before last, and there was a bartender there. This woman was horrendous, she was so mean – and this is a lot of bartenders in New York, especially in the bourgeois bullshit places. I walk in. I'm with my friend. We stand there and we're ordering a drink. Then just as she's about to fill up the glass, I said, "Actually, you know what? Hold on."

She says, "What? What the fuck?" She said this to me as I'm standing there.

By the way, A was me asking for a drink and changing it. B is her reaction where she says, "What?" Those two things aren't what

matter. What matters is C: how do I now react to this? Because that will define the relationship between me and this person.

I looked at her and I said, “You are so mean,” not “Don’t talk to me like that.” I just looked at her and I said very innocently, “You are so mean.”

She looked at me and she said, “Well, what do you want?”

I said, “Can I please change it?” and I changed my drink. I said, “Can I please change it to a vodka soda?”

Then she says, “Fine,” and I can see her softening a little bit. She says, “Anything else?”

I say, “No, we won’t ask you for anything ever again for the rest of our lives,” and she started laughing, and I got a smile. You know when you got a smile, “I’ve got this person now. I know you.”

She started smiling and laughing. She went and got the drink and she came back, and all of a sudden, this woman’s whole energy changed. I could see her giving little flirtatious looks. She had clearly been dealing with a certain type of person that night, or she had been living that way for a long time. But I was able to break her state. I was able to break her state from the reflex response by playing with her a little bit, because I’m not going to play that game. I’m not going to come and do battle on your turf like that. No, no, no, no. I know she’s used to a certain reaction from that, because she’s used to a guy saying, “Oh, well, I’m sorry,” being flustered. I said, “No, no, no. I’m going to take you and put you on my turf now.”

Now I get to change the dynamic, because I control C. We’re always concerned about B: how is someone going to react? The thing that controls attraction is part C. In the example I gave of this woman who had been through this abortion, part A, her telling me that, that wasn’t the important part, nor was the moment when I have the reflex response, being taken aback.

By the way, if she took my reflex response too seriously and too much at face value, would she have then gone into her own little depression

about it? Yes, right? She would have seen, "Oh, he's affected by this. I don't want to lose him over this. I don't want him to be…" and maybe she'd start crying and say, "Look, at the time it was a really difficult time and I just don't need you reacting in this way."

She could have gone into her own thing. And then I would have thought, "It's still a problem. It's still a problem." Now her reaction, C, to me having a negative reflex response would have sent us into a spiral where I would have thought, "This is still a problem for her. Now it's still a problem for me. Oh my God, this is an issue." But because she went on to tell the story of how strong this had made her in her life, her C made me even more attracted to her.

Now we get reaction D, which is not a reflex response. It's an earned response. It's an earned response here. D is your prize for what you do in part C. Do not beat yourself up for what people do as part B. That's them, their stuff, their reaction, their reflex response. Don't beat yourself up for that. Focus on mastering C.

Attendee: What could C be for Mindy and me?

Matthew: I had one woman, not to over complicate things, but she almost made C her A. She was a single mom, and I remember her going up to a guy and within the first 20 seconds, she said, "I have to tell you, you have the sexiest chin dimple. It's not as cute as my daughter's chin dimples, but it's very sexy." She basically took control. She owned it.

Some single moms come to me and say, "When should I bring it up?" She wasn't asking me that question. She wasn't saying, "When should I bring it up?" "Bring it up? It's part of my life. It doesn't matter. It's part of my life."

When do you bring up anything? Just when it feels normal. It doesn't matter what it is. When do I bring up that I sometimes go to L.A.? When the conversation makes that a thing that I should say. Like, "What have you been up to?" "I just came back from L.A."

"What have you been up to?" "Well, I just dropped my daughter off somewhere and now I'm out and I'm having a good time."

When does it come up? When it is a thing that you would say in that sentence. She didn't worry about that. She simply took control and owned it, and for that reason, this guy would flirt with her like mad and have a great time with her because he thought, "Oh, this isn't baggage for her. She doesn't see this as baggage. She just sees this as part of her world, part of her life."

The key rule with part C is when they give you their reflex response, part B, the key rule is to not have your reaction defined by what they do but to own it, stay unfazed, stay relaxed and playful, and if someone wants to react a certain way, let them. Let them be in their own little emotional moment. But don't be in their storm with them. Just let them experience it.

If he says, "Oh, I don't do kids, blah, blah, blah," then "That's fine. Don't worry, I wasn't asking you to marry me. You can relax. Do you want me to get you some water? You look so tense." Laugh. People's emotional reactions don't always warrant a serious response because they're not always to be taken seriously. If you want to go off in your little weird, crazy moment, that's fine. You do that.

I had a woman ask me what I did for work, and when I gave her a hint of it, she went after me on it – "So you just benefit from people's insecurities." I was just on a night out. I didn't want to do this. She was there and she said this, and I just looked at her and I said, "This was really a lovely conversation 30 seconds ago, but I should probably talk to people who are going to smile more at me and be nice. But have a lovely evening. Have a wonderful evening."

This woman came back not three minutes later while I was in another part of this venue and gave me her phone number on a napkin. Because I didn't play her game. When she said, "So you just benefit from people's insecurities," she was expecting me to say, "You don't know anything about my life. You don't know anything about my work. You don't know what I do. Let me tell you something, it's not benefiting from other people's…"

I could've done that, but no. I'm not being sucked into your game and your world. I refuse to be. If anything, you having such an

emotional reaction so quickly, I'm going to make light of that. I'm going to enjoy it and make light of it and be silly about it.

When that woman said, "What the fuck?" like I just did something terrible to her – no, I just decided to change a drink order – I'm not going to be sucked into that world. That's a huge emotional reaction that can have nothing to do with me.

There was a great moment when I was in a bar some years ago and there was this really flamboyant gay bartender. There was a guy at the bar. I forget exactly what he asked, but he said something and at the end of the sentence, he said, "No offense." This bartender looked at him and he said, "Oh, honey, you couldn't offend me; you don't even know me." That has stuck with me. That one line has stuck with me my whole life. "You couldn't offend me; you don't even know me."

When someone gives me a heightened response in B, I always know, "Oh, this is fine. This is them, but here's my opportunity." C is my golden opportunity for attraction. Don't ever forget that. C is where you get to show just how great you are. C is where you get to show your worth.

Anyone can do A, where I come up and say, "Hey, how are you? You look nice. I wanted to talk to you. You look pretty," whatever. That's the moment that anyone can do. C is where you build attraction. In A, you're just dealing with reflex.

Even as a guy, if I come up to you as a woman out of nowhere, in the street, in the daytime, whatever, I can't even get to attraction until I've gotten past your reflex. The first thing you're thinking is, "Who is he? What does he want? What's his agenda? Is he a guy trying to get something out of me? Is he sleazy? Is he weird? Is he crazy? Am I safe?" You're thinking of all of these things all at the same time, so I can't even get to attraction with you until I get past that moment.

I was out recently. There was a woman with a Chicago Bulls vest on. We were out in the club, and she has this cute Chicago Bulls vest on. My A was I said, "Do you really like basketball or is this just a cute vest?" She said, "Well, no I sometimes like basketball." Now she's in B. My C, my reaction to her reaction, was I said, "It doesn't matter. I

just wanted an excuse to talk to you." She started laughing, and she put out her hand and said, "I'm Gillian."

It was in that moment that we had an actual moment of attraction. In the first part when I say, "Are you actually into basketball or is that just a cute vest?" we're not in attraction there. We're just in her reflex response. "Oh, there's a guy talking to me. What does this mean?" That was her reaction.

When I said, "I don't really care. I just wanted an excuse to talk to you," that's the moment where I get to show my worth, because that's the moment where I'm different from every other guy who's spoken to her so far this evening. That's where attraction is built.

I find this very empowering, actually, because what you realize is whether it's a crutch or the fact that you have a child or whatever, people's reactions are just happening in part B. But part B is not the important part; it's how you react to part B that is really important.

People have plenty of problems, afflictions, things they think are baggage, things they think are going to slow them down, whatever. Plenty of people have those. Everyone has something, everyone. But the people who do really well are not the people without baggage; they're the people that get really good trained responses to this part here, at the same time as mastering their internal mindset and understanding "I'm not trying to attract the whole world. I'm just trying to attract the right type of guy."

And guess what? You being a single mom is a great filter because it allows you to tell that guy who is going to be more attracted to you because of that situation very easily from that guy who's going to run scared, who by the way is usually the guy who will run scared even if you don't have a kid, which is kind of interesting.

Attendee: It's actually funny. I was telling Ilana that I'm talking to two guys online and coincidently they both have children. One wrote in on his profile, but I kind of skimmed over it and didn't really register it. Then we were talking about meeting up and he says, "By the way, I want you to know I have a daughter. I hope that's okay. I just want to be up front." At first, I thought, "Crap. Why didn't I he

say that?" and then I saw that he had said it. I said, "Oh, yeah, it's not a problem. It's fine."

Then the other guy says, "Oh, I really wish I could see you right now, but I can't get a sitter for my son," and then he just kept going. I found that more attractive because he found it a way of making it like, "This is my situation. Wish we could hang out, but we can't."

Matthew: The important thing is he didn't make it a situation. It just was part of the dialogue. It was just part of the conversation. It wasn't any more significant than, "I have to go to a yoga class."

Attendee: A lot of those initial reactions… Because I just turned 40, so that's also something permanent that can't be changed. I don't have any children, so that I think brings its own responses of, "Oh." The way you just described that, I didn't realize so much of that is a reflex response.

Matthew: Yes, absolutely.

Attendee: If I sit there and apologize or whatever for the fact that I'm 40, then it just… Having gone through my own reactions to that, seeing how it influences, I just think everybody has something, whether it's kids or…

Matthew: Everybody has something. What an interesting counterbalance. Isn't that fascinating?

Attendee: I think, "Wow, it would be great if I was a single mom and had the kid thing out of the way. That would free me up that this guy isn't going to think…

Matthew: But isn't that funny? I want you to notice that. Erica's response – and actually she's not wrong in her frame of reference there – is, "Well, if I already have a child, I now in a way have the freedom to go and find someone and for that to not be a pressure on me," or as you said it, not to be a pressure on other people.

It's only one frame of reference. There are many available to us. For those of you who have done the Retreat, you know this part. It's something we train ourselves on the Retreat. Part of the beauty

of life is, out of all the frames of reference available to us, pick the one that's the most helpful. "How can I see this situation in the most positive way?" That's not happy thinking; it's literally brain training. It's literally training yourself to find the one that has the best possible meaning for us.

There are many frames of reference available to you – that's just one – but of all of them, that's actually kind of a powerful one that is worth considering for you because there is some truth to that.

Attendee: Maybe I'll meet a guy who has a kid. Isn't that a possibility?

Matthew: Yeah, but you'd hate that. "A guy with a kid? Please." That would be great. That would be some amazing irony right there. I would love it if you said that. Okay. Amazing.

Let's shake things up a bit. We'll get around to everybody. Erica, why don't you talk to us for a little bit or tell us something that you really wanted to go through?

Attendee: Just when you were describing the reflex response thing, I feel like I have a lot –maybe ten – of those that somebody would compile them all into one. So sometimes I think it's hard for me to know how to pace that and not feel like, "Okay, I need to put everything there so that I can prove that I'm okay with all this," because maybe then that's too much for the person.

Matthew: There are certain things that you feel they're almost multiple things that could raise that for someone?

Attendee: Oh, they have. They have.

Matthew: You're worried about having them all together?

Attendee: I'm 40. I've been divorced twice. I have a Ph.D., which also brings in reactions. Then my PhD is in psychology. I always get back a lot of responses from people like, "Oh, you're analyzing me," or just all kinds of stuff. That's just a reflex response, but I really struggle with feeling like I need to apologize for those things or not bring it up.

When people ask, "What do you do," and I feel irritated because I feel like that has really nothing to do with me. That's just a job. All these things. It feels like a big cliché, being in New York, I have to focus on my career. When you were describing, I realized I need to look past more people's reflex response.

Matthew: Give me five counterpoints to all of those that I can focus on instead of those. Try.

Attendee: I guess part of the reason I am here is because when I found your information, like you were saying how all the programs and stuff have really helped, it has dramatically changed things, even since I for example signed up just to do this, there was somebody I had just started talking to and just by applying everything I've been learning, it makes a huge difference. But I think for me now to go beyond the initial part and think about a real relationship, that's I think where I have a problem.

Matthew: I think my concern is that because you're focused on all of those things, it becomes the focus for somebody else. Sometimes we think we're good at hiding that focus – "I don't bring up any of those things as problems" – it doesn't mean we're not somehow communicating that energy with those things. Sometimes when we are worried about something, we will communicate that we're worried about it whilst we're talking. It's almost like we go in waiting to get punched. We go in like this. When someone feels that, they start to get concerned.

Now, the reason I asked you to find five counterbalances to that is I think they exist quite easily for you, and I think we should just have a moment where we try and focus on those. Firstly, you're 40, right?

Attendee: Yeah. It's not like I don't think there's anything positive. I absolutely agree; I have a lot of great qualities, but how is that going to… I don't know. I just feel like…

Matthew: I think they're the same thing, though. Your degree is in psychology?

Attendee: Yeah, but it's not doing therapy or anything like that.

Matthew: No, I think, "Okay, she's smart. That's good." My mind doesn't go to "Oh, she analyzes." My mind goes to "She's a smart cookie."

Attendee: Any time I ever mention that, guys go… I'm not bringing it up, it just happened to come up.

Attendee: I have the same. I have a Ph.D. in chemical engineering, so the response I get from men… It's all been in my change and in my reaction to how I present it, even. I know already I'm going to get that, "Oh" – there's a pause there – but if I just brush it off and I keep going…

Matthew: By the way, the moment they feel your feminine energy, the moment they feel your kindness, the moment they feel those things, they're very quick to overcome that type of thing – and as long as you don't make them feel stupid, which is really important.

One of my part C's, how I deal with people's reflex response to what I do, which is really in its own way, as much of a pain in the ass as it is beneficial. It's beneficial in the sense that it's nice to have achieved something. But what it is exactly will very quickly have people saying, "You're analyzing me, you have all of these methods."

I've gotten so good at killing that. People say that and I say, "Listen. When I'm not working, thinking in that way is exhausting. Trust me, I just want to have a beer with you and relax. My brain doesn't work that way. I'd have to be a crazy person to sit here analyzing everything. The moment I clock off, I want to relax. I want to relax and be spontaneous, so don't get all weird on me."

Then I put it back on them, and that person will now be the one who is the weird one if they keep bringing it up or they make it an issue. It kills it – it really does kill it – and people feel my authenticity, as well, so they know it's not that way.

But I think the psychology thing is great. I think the fact that you're 40 is great. I think the fact that you're hot is working for you, as well. I think this is a focus thing right now, and because it's a focus thing, it becomes a problem.

I've been to a lot of companies and trained them in sales, and one of the big things that you teach salespeople is whatever problems you're worried about, you'll attract. If you're selling something that is $5000 and spending $5000 feels like a big problem to you and it's a big scary thing to you, you'll attract those problems from clients, as well. When you speak to them, the objection you will get the most is a money objection, because it's a big deal to you.

I noticed this for myself. When my financial situation changed, I actually became a better salesman, because all of a sudden, when I would talk about a program that was $4000 or whatever, I would talk about that and it wouldn't be a big deal to me, so I wouldn't make it a big deal to other people.

But when I was broke and talking about an expensive program, I'd say, "It's this much," and people would say, "Oh, it's that much?" "Yeah. Do you want it?" and they'd say, "I don't know. It's so expensive." "Yeah, but…" Nowadays when I talk about things, I say, "Of course you should come. We'll figure out the rest, but of course you should come." It's not even a thing.

I was really attracting those problems when they were a big deal to me. I would attract a lot of those problems. But when it wasn't a big deal to me anymore, that would change. It's the same for every sales team. When you can condition people out of making those things a problem, they won't attract those problems in the same way as before.

It doesn't mean a customer will never bring it up. It doesn't mean someone won't ever say, "Well, what about the money aspect?" But the difference is instead of hearing about the money aspect and saying, "Oh, yeah. I know what you mean by that, but…" you hear the money thing and you say, "Listen, let me tell you something," and you come at it from a completely different level of certainty. Now someone realizes, "Oh, wow."

For you, what I really want is for you to come at those types of things with a completely different level of certainty – and not a fake certainty, because that's what I see a lot of people do. It's not this on the nose, but they'll say, "Yeah, I'm in mechanical engineering," and the guy will say, "Oh, wow," and you'll say, "Oh, you're not one of

those guys who's intimidated by that?" They're trying to act certain with it, but really underneath they're still deeply insecure about it, and that's why it still comes off as almost aggressive.

Instead, I'm talking about a type of certainty where somebody says something and it just washes over you – you can really smile about it in the same way you did, of course, when you were on your wheelie contraption, scooter. They used to be called that, I think. But when you're on that, you're able of laugh it off and start to come at it with more certainty.

I think the danger… It's easy for me to say from a distance because I'm me and when it's someone else's problem, it's always fucking easy. But from a distance, none of these… I look at you and I say, "There are so many men out there for you." I don't mean that as a platitude. I mean it quite literally. I'm a very, very logical person, and I look at a lot based on probability, and I'm a big skeptic, so I don't say things to sugarcoat them or for the sake of it. There are just so many men out there for you.

But compounding all of those things in that way where you say, "And this and that and that. These are all the things that worry me," I think has the potential to… I know I could do it with certain things, where if I can compound them all, if I put them all together in a box like that, they gain so much more power.

I don't think all of these things are really relevant. Do you want kids by the way, or you don't?

Attendee: It would be nice, sure, to have my genes passed on to humankind. But I feel like it could be either way, however that ended up being. Part of it is these are all of my securities and now it's just my big chance to talk to you here's a summary of all these issues.

Matthew: If there's more, I want to hear them.

Attendee: People were saying about things you can't change. Those are certain things I can't change in and of themselves. But it's like I'm in my own head and I think about it, it's really easy to view those things as the negative or to put people off. But sometimes it's really

hard to come up with shifting that mindset from your own mind. It's really easy to hear it from…

Matthew: What's the one that bothers you the most?

Attendee: Probably being divorced, because I've been divorced twice, so I feel like that is a little different because it is something that I had input into. One time, fine. But after the second, that's when you have to stop and figure things out. I feel like I learned a lot as a result of that. I'm definitely a different person now.

Matthew: Were there similar reasons for both divorces, or do you feel like you learned completely different lessons both times?

Attendee: No, I think it was very different, but I felt like I was left with the same feeling after feeling, just blindsided or confused, those sorts of things, like not understanding. Just a lot of things I've learned from you.

Matthew: What were the biggest lessons you did learn from those divorces?

Attendee: Looking back, I could see that I didn't understand like how you talk about the respect factor and being able to have a standard and communicate that to somebody in a way that doesn't sound really angry.

Matthew: Was your tendency…? Did you more not communicate your standard, or…?

Attendee: Yes.

Matthew: You did, or you didn't do it and then when you finally did, you exploded? How did it come about?

Attendee: I don't think I knew how to communicate it, or even realizing – just assuming that this person obviously must know, not realizing how important it is just to have… It sounds stupid saying this, but just feeling like you have to say these things and be direct about it, but then being worried. "What's this person's reaction going to be?"

Matthew: Are there any examples you could give us of something that you let slide consistently? I'd love to hear one

Attendee: I feel like I would be really embarrassed.

Matthew: I can tell you some embarrassing stuff if you want.

Attendee: My ex-husband ended up having someone else get pregnant. He had been cheating on me. Just being completely overwhelmed, "Wow, this was going on," letting that slide. I guess that's a big summary for it.

Matthew: He was doing that and you knew about it for a while and you hadn't said anything? Is that right?

Attendee: No, I found out, and I think I was just so shocked. But I just felt like there must be some solution to this, just not understanding how to take care of my own self-respect. "How did it get to this point?"

Matthew: The easy thing for anyone to say is, "Why didn't you just leave?" But while you were in it, did you feel like even if you've made the decision to stay, you didn't communicate enough about why what had gone wrong or why…?

Attendee: Way before that. That's what I feel like looking back, I can see in the beginning, it just didn't set the tone right up front. It almost feels like looking back like, "Oh, it's or something."

Matthew: I want to hear about that. In what way do you feel you didn't set the tone early on?

Attendee: Maybe rushing into things too quickly.

Matthew: You mean like ignoring his nature or ignoring something about him?

Attendee: Getting caught up in how excited I was about the person and not focusing on how they were acting towards me – confusing they could be a great, fun person, but it's how they're investing in

you. That's something that I got confused. Those are the type of things that…

Matthew: You felt very passionate at the time, but you were ignoring some of the ways that he wasn't giving you enough or showing you enough commitment?

Attendee: Yeah. Looking back, I can see a lot of things like that. That was a couple years ago. This is very embarrassing to talk about it here in front of all these people, but I feel like it's something where I'm not really worried about rejection because I felt like, "Okay, that was pretty rejecting and humiliating," but it's more about how to trust my own judgment going into a new situation and being more concerned with what happens once I start really having feelings for somebody.

At the time, I thought I was confident in how I felt or I thought I had the right person. So now I'm dating more that kind of thing, all these doubts come up like. "Well, you were fooled before. You thought this before. Don't let yourself get too comfortable or something's going to go…" That's not a fun thing to have when you're trying to go beyond, let's say, the first few dates.

Matthew: Isn't it mad how passionate you can feel about the wrong person? It's amazing. I don't think anyone who has actually put themselves out there in their love lives could say they haven't had an experience where they just felt madly passionate about someone and then either felt completely wrong about that feeling later on, or that they rushed into it, or that person hurt them.

What I'm interested in is in terms of the lesson that you took from that, in a nutshell, what would you say is the lesson you took from it – and not the lesson that sounds good, but the one you think you actually internalized?

It could sound good to say, "Measure myself in the beginning of a relationship." But it might be that the real lesson you took was "Don't get passionate anymore when you like someone." I don't know. What's the thing that you internalized as the lesson?

Attendee: I have to say, it took me a long time to get past internalizing the negative lesson.

Matthew: What was the negative lesson that you feel you took on?

Attendee: There was something wrong with me. It felt like the ultimate rejection, feeling like, "Okay, I'm not going to put myself out there." It's not just going up to someone random you don't know. It felt like, "Wow, this person really knew me," so it felt more personal.

Matthew: Of course.

Attendee: It was.

Matthew: I'm a strong believer that in so many relationships, the thing that created problems in the end was something that we could have seen in the beginning. I do believe that for so many. It's not always true, but it's true for a lot.

Now, of course, if you ignore a problem in the beginning, you can blame yourself for ignoring the problem, but what you mustn't do is blame yourself for the problem. I'm going to go back over that. In other words, you can look back and say, "Shame on me for my ignorance. Shame on me that I didn't pay more attention, or that I did pay attention and I chose to ignore it. That's on me."

For example – a completely different example – we start dating someone who we know is a relentless flirt with everybody, and then four years in, we say, "They're flirting with everybody. I'm just not attractive enough." What? No. No, you started dating someone who was like this. This is not the same thing as you now not being good enough. You started dating someone who was like this.

Yes, I'm going to give you the responsibility of saying, "You ignored it. You shouldn't have ignored it." We must take responsibility for what we have created. But we mustn't take responsibility for the wrong things. I think part of being an adult is paying for our mistakes, but not blaming ourselves for mistakes that aren't our own. That's important.

Here's for me what has the potential to make you very interesting out of that situation. I think the real lesson beyond all of the tough stuff, the really hard stuff – because of course, this is really difficult stuff for anyone – and you could tell me if you agree, is "When I get into a relationship, I have to be secure enough and have high enough standards that I know I can separate the superficial from the things that really are going to make this person a great partner and be bold enough to communicate those standards."

By the way, that's an incredibly difficult thing to do. It's understated how tough it is to communicate standards. It's amazing. I have a friend of mine who's really good at communicating standards. Now when you hear how she does it, it sounds quite simple, but to everyone around her, it doesn't feel simple.

Her friend said to her, "Guys always leave it till the last minute to ask me out, and when they do they just text me. I really want them to call me and ask me out." This friend of mine said to her friend, "Well, just tell them."

"What do you mean, just tell them. I don't want to sound like a bitch. I don't want to sound like I'm high maintenance. What do you mean, just tell them?" She says, "Just tell him."

Now, that seems simple to her. But the genius was in the way that she did it. She said, "Well, what I even text a guy to say that?" She said, "I would text him, 'I'm a little old-fashioned, so if you want to take me on a date, you're going to have to call me LOL.' You could add the LOL in if you want to make it funny."

Then I heard that, and it sounds so simple, but I said, "That's brilliant." That's really good, and no one ever does it. If a guy is not asking you on a date or he keeps asking you by text, you say to him, "I'm a little old-fashioned, so if you want to take me out, you're going to have to give me a call LOL." Put a kiss on the end or whatever. You can always sweeten the pill, but it's still the right pill.

I literally had to hear this one example before I realized why this woman has a completely different love life. It's because she will communicate those things, and she will communicate them early.

Now, the tough part, of course, is not to learn the lesson that falling for someone is dangerous or that passion is a bad thing, because actually, some of the most fun in a relationship comes from the really beautiful moment when you feel passionate about someone and you let yourself go and let yourself be part of that ride. That's a really important part of it, and it's part of the joy of it. If you take away that, you take away all of the fun.

But the really interesting lesson is saying, "I'm going to allow myself to feel all of this passion, but I'm also going to be brave enough and strong enough to always see this with transparency for what it is. If it turns out to be in the light of day, this person is even better because they keep investing and they keep giving to me and they show me all the right signs, great. But if in the light of day, I start to see some cracks that I shouldn't ignore, I have to pay attention to those even if I'm feeling passionate." Then that's important, too.

Would you agree that's the right lesson?

Attendee: Yeah, absolutely.

Matthew: But to come full circle for a moment, I think that's a lesson that makes you eminently more interesting as a person. I truly believe that. I want to meet someone who's already learned that lesson. I don't want to meet somebody who has no idea about that lesson. The person who isn't weathered in that way in relationships has far less chance of making it work.

I want to say this on TV at some point to the whole of America: the whole "How many times have you been divorced thing?" as some sort of barometer for relationship success is a joke. It's a joke.

Attendee: I don't have a problem getting men to propose; it's just it hasn't worked out. I don't have an issue with that.

Matthew: But think about that. It hasn't worked out how many times? How many times has it not worked out for this woman? Twice. Where else in your life is it a travesty if you mess up twice? If you can't make it work twice, where else in your life is that a big deal?

If you messed up two job interviews, would you say, "I can never work again? That's it." You cook two bad meals, you say, "I'll never cook again. I'm a bad cook." No, you have to cook 20 bad meals to get to a good meal.

In a sport, in anything, you wouldn't even take someone seriously who hadn't messed up more than twice, would you? You would not take them seriously. You wouldn't take me seriously if I had messed up twice in any of these areas. You take me seriously because I'm honest with you about screwing up again and again and again.

The fact that people say, "Oh, I've stayed married," for most people simply speaks to their stubbornness and how unhappy they'll make themselves. It has nothing to do with how successful they are in marriage; it's just about how stubborn they are about not wanting to leave something that's failing, which is really funny if you think about it. If you took out the amount of people who have only been married once and are still married but are unhappy, we would be left with a very small sampling of married people.

We have to get past the superficiality of all of this. I always found it funny when I first found out that there are a lot of women who in order to both be having sex but also not have to admit to too many partners, simply just keep having sex with the same men so that over the years, they can say, "Well, I only slept with three people." But they still maybe were having sex all the time for their lives. It's so stupid. It's so stupid. It's such a hypocrisy. It means nothing. You're either having sex or you're not. "I have only slept with three people." What difference does it make?

The same with divorce. Any sensible intelligent human being can be divorced several times in their life because sometimes that's the sensible thing to do, of course. That's the intelligent thing to do. I think you understanding and believing that is important first, before you worry about whether you can get men to believe that, because it won't matter unless you have internalized that.

To me – and truly, I promise I would tell you otherwise – it only makes you more interesting to me. It means you have more to say. The fact that that has happened means me and you have more to

talk about, because if you'd never done that, we have nothing to talk about. I need you to have experienced things like that for us to have lessons to talk about.

Everyone has different lessons, of course, from different parts of their life, but that's an interesting one and shouldn't be shrugged off. It really is an interesting one, and I would be using it. I would be using it to talk about what you've learned.

If that conversation came up for me, if I was you talking to guys about that conversation, I would be the first one to talk about the specifics of what that had taught me, because the specifics are either what will tell a guy, "Oh, my God, this woman is the complete package now as a result of what she learned," or "Oh, my God, this woman is a train wreck."

If you don't educate me on the lessons that you have taken from that and how great and meaningful those lessons are, you allow me to assume the worst, instead of me understanding, "Oh, my God, this woman has been through it, but look what she's learned as a result. I can't get that from a 25-year-old who has never been through that. I can't learn that, or I can't be equals with this person because this person would have to go through this to learn this."

If I can go as far as to say this, I really think that those divorces should be a confidence builder for you, not something that you feel you're going in with these problems before you started. I actually think they should be a confidence builder.

Attendee: Well, it's definitely cured me of any desperation or neediness, which apparently that helps, because I'm more indifferent about the marriage aspect, which has seemed to translate well in dating. I'm not concerned about it, but I'm not opposed to it. Again, I think it's more exactly what you're saying. It's the internal part that…

Matthew: But don't let it kill your sense of romance. You mustn't let it do that. That's really important. Of all people, I was sitting with my agent. Agents are normally complete assholes. But I sat with my agent, and I had come out of a relationship and I was in this place where he said to me, "What next?"

I said, "I'm good," like, "That sucked. I'm good. I'm just not open to meeting someone in that way."

He looked at me, and I'll never forget the disappointment as he looked at me. He looked at me and said, "Don't be that guy."

I said, "What do you mean?" I was in my cool little indifferent state.

He looked at me and he said, "Don't be that guy."

I said, "What guy?"

He says, "This thing. Like, 'Oh, I'm not going to meet anyone now or I'm so closed off to a relationship.' That's so fucking boring. Don't be that guy." He started making fun of me. He said, "I'm the dating and relationship coach who doesn't want a relationship. It's like some fucking cheesy movie. This is like some bad movie. Oh, there's so much irony in you now don't want a relationship. Don't be that guy. That's ugly and gross. You're better than that."

I was laughing, and he said, "I'm serious. Don't lose the sense of romanticism and fun and what could be. I'm not saying you have to meet the right person tomorrow or this year or next year, but be interesting enough to be open to it. That's interesting and that's sexy and that's fun. Be the person who is open to it. Don't close yourself off to that." He slapped me in the face with that, because I was kind of high and mighty in my indifference, and he didn't allow me to be.

I'll pass his gift to me to you because it is important. The moments where you smile and light up and are youthful in that way are super attractive. They are really, really attractive. You maintaining that is much more important to me than any conversation about your past marriages, because that's done, that's in the past. But whoever is going to spend time with you now wants to see that spark and that glint in your eye because isn't that what we all want? We want to look at someone across the bar and have those fireworks and have that moment. That's a really special thing. Don't ever deny someone that from you.

Before we move on, there is Erica firstly. I wrote a couple of notes because let's make this practical. When you're talking about

your divorce, actually communicating it not only from a positive standpoint but actually focusing on the lessons instead of the fact that you've been divorced, I think this is an interesting structure that you may want to write down and have in your head.

The first thing is don't ever think that you ever need to be mentioning specifics when you're having these conversations, because it's not necessary. You can at some point, but it's not at that point necessary. You don't have to have the specifics to give the lesson that you learned. If you do mention specifics, by the way, a little indifference doesn't hurt. "This happened and he did this," the way you would talk to someone who you don't know that well.

When you talk about the lessons you learned from that event, almost be excited about what you have learned, like you really are grateful about what you've learned. "It's been amazing because I've learned so much. I really am so grateful for the things that those relationships taught me." It's not like you're the victim and now you have this lesson; It's actually cool that you know this stuff now. You're actually grateful to know these things now and it has given you so much.

Then this is really important. It's important to show that none of this has stopped you being romantic. When you're speaking about it, to put it in plain terms, if I were you, I might be telling this story… For example, let's say this isn't a conversation where she says, "I wanted to tell you that I have been divorced and I've learned so much." No. This is the moment where he is talking about his past relationships, "I was in a relationship," and she says, "Yeah, I totally understand that. I've been married before, and I learned so much from the relationships that I have been in and the marriages that I have been in. I have learned so much, and I'm so grateful because now, for me, a relationship is a team. The one thing I have learned in my life is that a relationship is a team, and those marriages really taught me that I wasn't part of the right team and that the right person who comes along is really your teammate. That's how relationships work."

"But I'm so grateful that I learned what can go wrong and not choosing the wrong person. But I'm a romantic. I'll never stop being romantic. I'll be a romantic until the day I die. That's just who I am.

I love life and I love looking at what's around the corner. I'm always excited about that."

If she says it like that, everything about it is really attractive – from learning things from those relationships to bringing it up casually without having to make it a thing to stressing that she is a romantic person and that she does have a love for life, and so there is that excitement around the corner.

Now, that's something that has to be internalized as well as being an outward thing. We're just talking about the ability to say these things right now. They have to come from you, as well, to be congruent. But that's when I was thinking about how specifically would you put these things into words, those are some of the ways that I would put them into words. Does that make sense?

Attendee: Yes, absolutely.

Matthew: Do you have any questions about that?

Attendee: No.

Matthew: Was it slightly different?

Attendee: That's more than I expected.

Matthew: Okay, good. Because I saw you giving me a face. Great. Okay. This is amazing. That's amazing.

Attendee: Thank you.

Matthew: No, of course. For everyone in this room now, that's the three-part structure of you don't need to go into specifics… Just because someone asks you a question, it doesn't mean you can't be selective about how much you feel the need to tell them. Don't go into specifics, and if you must, a little indifference won't hurt you. Be casual about it. These things are in the past.

Talk about the lessons you learned, and be excited about the lessons you learned and be passionate about the lessons you learned. Lastly,

don't ever show or let these things suck the life out of you. You're still a romantic.

I think men and women both want this, but men really love when they meet someone who they feel like… I said this to Jamison. This is a terrible analogy. No matter how much you have been through in your life, there still has to be an element to you that's an unopened can of Coke. There is still that satisfaction from opening the can, whatever it is.

Whether it's, "I still have more to experience, I'm still romantic, I have such a love for life, there's still so much I want to learn, I still am so excited about meeting amazing people." That's the person who we want to be around as opposed to the person who is "Oh, I've already had all this happen to me and now here I am in front of you."

Be the unopened can. It's kind of good, though. I kind of like it.

Attendee: It's a good throw pillow.

Matthew: Exactly. If nothing else, it will end up on a throw pillow. I'm going to go to the others among you for questions, but I just want to recap on the attraction formula. You have heard it from me in different places before, but I want to get this down. It basically contextualizes everything that we talked about today, and the nice thing about this formula is no matter how many times I talk about this, it always becomes more relevant, not less.

There are four parts to the attraction formula:

1. Visual chemistry
2. Perceived value
3. Perceived challenge
4. Connection

Four parts: visual chemistry, perceived value, perceived challenge, and connection. I've always said this is what's necessary for deep and lasting attraction. Everything we talk about today will increase one of these.

The stuff we talked about in terms of on a date, even the touch, the body language, stuff like that, you can help your visual chemistry. Or your connection, of course – making someone feel more connected to you so they feel more comfortable so they feel like they can lean over and give you that kiss.

The two you're going to hear a lot about are perceived value and perceived challenge. What we talked about with Erica is taking this situation in her life and actually raising her value with it instead of her feeling like it decreases her value. How can we actually raise her value?

We were joking just now. I noticed that Mindy's crutch that we've been talking about is leopard skin. I thought this is a good example of how she could talk about how she sexed up her crutch. It's the sexiest crutch in New York.

Attendee: That's true.

Matthew: Now you might say, "How does joking about it in that way fit into the attraction formula?" Firstly it fits into our idea of what we said before about "If I have something, own it. Be prepared to have fun with it. Show that you're not affected by it."

But this actually raises your value because it shows that there's this thing that could be an issue for you, but isn't. You're bigger than it, and you're able to be funny about it, so it raises your value because it shows just how cool and in control you are. It also shows that you're funny, as well as everything else. It gives a unique pairing, as well, something we haven't talked about yet today. But those of you who came on the tour event know what a unique pairing is.

We're not going to do any more on this today, but I want it to be the backdrop for everything we do today. Just to briefly say, visual chemistry is that animal attraction between two people. Perceived value is "How much value do I think you have is a person and will have for my life?" Perceived challenge: "To what extent do I have to earn that value? Does it come easily to me or to I have to earn it?" We all want someone secretly who we feel like we have to earn a little bit, not someone who just comes to us on a plate.

Then connection: "To what extent are our beliefs and our ideas on life aligned?" In a nutshell, do you and I understand each other and agree a lot on what life is about? We don't have to agree on everything we think. I was taught that it's more important how you think than what you think, and actually a lot of connection is just, "Do you and I think in similar ways?" not "Do we think the exact same things?"

A good example of that is you could be a Republican or Democrat, and interestingly, that doesn't actually tell me a lot about you. But if I find out why you are, I can actually find that there is a lot of commonality between why you're a Democrat and why I'm a Republican. We may just have arrived at different conclusions, but we may think the same way. We've just arrived at a different place. It's kind of interesting.

Our attraction formula. Keep that in mind as we go through today, and always be thinking, "Which part of my formula is this helping me with?"

Jennifer, talk to me.

Attendee: I'll give you the whole spiel and rundown. This is my life. I'm very friendly, I'm very outgoing, and I don't have a problem meeting guys. I use every avenue out there to do so, whether it's online dating or just by being in an elevator with someone or at Starbucks or the deli. I just find that just talking with people… Anyone. It could be the guy making the sandwich, it could be the guy buying the sandwich, whoever it might be.

I go out on a lot of dates. It's not a problem getting the dates or going on the dates. There is just something that happens that doesn't transition into a relationship. I've had a bulk of time now where I haven't been in a relationship long-term with a guy. Maybe at the most, six months, and that was definitely a few years ago. And I always hear the question, "Why? Why? Why?"

I do a lot of things socially, whether I'm out with my friends or I'm with my family or whether I'm traveling or going to a museum, going to a show, going kayaking, whatever it might be. I have a lot of interests and I do a lot of things. I even host speed dates. I've been doing that for very long time, so I see a lot of dynamics all the time.

I constantly hear the same thing over and over and over, "Why are you single?"

My question is I have a lot of questions about the dating dynamics and the dance of that, from what happens at the end of the date when the check comes and there is that sort of dance. Are you supposed to offer or not offer or fiddle in your purse or whatever it might be? When I'm out with my girls, we're always looking around and looking at the dynamics of how people interact.

Again, it's not for a lack of not being able to meet people. I could sit in a bar and the guy next to me is wearing an orange shirt and I'll say, "Oh, are you rooting for Florida? They're wearing orange, too." It's not that. There's just something that's not obviously translating into meeting the right one.

And I'm definitely open to it. It's just for some reason. A lot of times people say, "Well, you're really picky," and I say "Well, it's a fussy thing to be out there looking. If you want to make that decision of someone to be in a relationship with, it should be someone you like." "Just pick someone. Just pick someone," I hear all the time. I say, "Well, you just picked someone and look how that's going for you." I hear that crap all the time. I'm sick of it. Stop complaining.

I put a high value on myself and where I want to be, and I have a really great life here in Manhattan. I live in Manhattan. I'm constantly out and about. I have a great job. I have so many great things.

I have great role models of people who are in relationships. I see that every day, from my brother to my best friend. I see a lot of crappy relationships, too – another great friend. And I'm like "I want that, I don't want that." I just came here today to ask the question, what can I tweak? What's missing? What can I do better? What can I learn? What can I build upon? That sort of thing.

Matthew: I love that you phrase it that way. It speaks highly of you that you phrase it that way, because most people don't, of course. They're not asking what they can do better or what they can adapt. Where do you normally see it not going somewhere?

Attendee: I go out on a lot of nice dates – I do – and then either I'll have the interest in them and they won't have the interest back, or vice versa. I think a lot of the online dating is really good in one respect because it does open your doors to a lot of people you wouldn't meet, but then there is a very big surface level to it. My God, I've gone on so many dates in general, I can wallpaper this whole room with 8.5" x 11"s.

It's really scary and funny at the same time. I'm always the person with cool dating stories. "What happened?" "He showed up and he was 500 pounds. I could curl up and fit in his stomach." "Why did that happen?" "I don't know. Then he got mad at me."

Because he put "muscular" and a different picture up, and it was like "huskular." Then he got really mad at the end of the date when I said, "I'm looking for someone who leads a healthy lifestyle," and he said, "What, you don't like my weight?"

Matthew: You said that on the date?

Attendee: I did. After I sat through the whole dinner and watched him eat all the sushi. I barely got a piece.

Matthew: Wow, that was honest. That was very honest. You didn't even say it when it was practical to say it?

Attendee: She was hungry.

Attendee: I was angry. I went in there hungry. Just different things. I'll try sporadically meeting up with someone, making plans with someone, from brunch to drinks to dinner, sitting at the bar catty-cornered, the whole thing. Everything in your book, I am the role model student. I have done it all. So what can I do differently to make it work?

Matthew: When you say you've been on a lot of nice dates, what does that mean?

Attendee: I saw you writing that when I said "nice." Oh, there's the word. They're okay. They're good. Some of them are better than others. They're always different. I've been taken to Pearl Jam concerts

and basketball games and museums and wine tastings and all sorts of everything. All sorts of everything you could think of, moving from location to location to location. I don't know. You tell me, Mr. Expert.

Matthew: Well, we have to dig a little.

Attendee: Yeah, we do. Oh, and I want to address also the texting and the sexting and the crazy pictures that come about. At the end of the date, yes he kissed, and it's like, "Can I come up and cuddle?" "Cuddle? I don't even know your last name. I just wanted to see if you were a good kisser."

I get that a lot. With a guy who I like and I am flirty or touchy or whatever, at the end of the night, the kiss will happen and then sometimes they'll say, "Can I come up and cuddle?" and I say, "Well, you know, that's my space and I just don't know if I want you in it right now."

Matthew: Is that what you say?

Attendee: Sometimes. "Maybe later at another time. Let's see where it goes."

Matthew: Okay.

Attendee: That's a new one I've tried because sometimes I'm so taken aback, I don't know what to say.

Matthew: You strike me as being quite logical in your communication.

Attendee: Okay. That might be true.

Matthew: That, for example, is a very logical thing to say. It's true, which is why you say it. In the same way that I feel the way your mind works – and please correct me if I'm wrong – but even by the sushi story, it seems like you said that thing because it was true, but I don't know in what way it would have served you to say it.

Attendee: It was to serve me because I had had it, but that's just one story. It's like, he's called the "huskular" guy.

Matthew: Sure.

Attendee: I have a list. I forgot to bring my phone.

Matthew: For example, the guy who wants to come up to your apartment. It's quite a common thing, right? Guys will do this a lot. It's not always untrue, by the way, as well, and it's important to know. A guy will want a kiss, maybe he gets a kiss. He may want sex, say he wants to come you or he wants you to come up, and in a sense, his polite way of going about this is to say, "We don't have to have sex. We can just cuddle."

Now, actually sometimes they mean it.

Attendee: But I don't think it's appropriate after a first date with someone to be going up to someone's apartment. Maybe it's a little old-fashioned, but once you set that tone and put that out there that it's okay, then if you continue to date this person, it's every time, they're coming up to your apartment. You can't go back.

Matthew: Sure, I agree. But I fear you may be wearing that too much.

Attendee: Then every guy would be up in my apartment. My doorman would think I am the biggest slut.

Matthew: I'm not saying you should have them to your apartment. But it may be there is something, and I'm not suggesting this is the overarching issue, but it's an interesting one to talk about, to begin with anyway. The way that you communicate that is really important because you can either build attraction in those moments or you can create a vibe that becomes difficult to come back from.

There's pride wrapped up in it, ego. A guy wants to feel smooth. He wants to feel like he knows what he's doing, or at the very least, he wants to feel like you appreciate him for his style of things. By the way, if you don't appreciate his style of things, there's no harm in telling him, but there's a way to do that, too. But he wants to feel like you see him as an attractive man who you would want to do those things with.

The really important part is always that you're able to in some way communicate, "I do want this thing with you." I have a model for this, actually, that's really simple. It's Desire, Standard, Inspire.

I'll give you an example. If a guy said to you, "Why don't we go up to yours," it follows this model. You could say, "That's really, really tempting because you're hot, I'm attracted to you. I just don't move quite that fast. But I do want to see you again, so send me a text or give me a call."

Now let me break this down. Desire, Standard, Inspire. Desire is part one. This is where you show a guy that you do desire him. It's a very important step, because it's what allows you to say everything that comes after that. It's a bit like saying, "Before any of what I say runs the risk of affecting your ego, let me make something clear. I want to jump you, too." Sometimes you say it in exactly those words, which is fun.

But in this case, let's say we're not. You say, "As tempting as that is because you're really hot." Now anything you say after this can't hurt me, can it? The moment you said that, nothing you can say after that can hurt me because you already validated me. That's Desire.

Standard comes next: "I just don't move that quickly." Now you assert your standard.

Inspire is where you finish it by leaving the door open for him to keep trying and be better. You say, "But I do want to see you again, so you should call me."

I actually prefer that to "Give me a text this week." "You should call me" is actually more impactful because it's also more certain, isn't it? "You should call me." There's a lot of certainty and confidence in that.

Now, if I'm that guy in that moment on that night, I leave you being even more excited about the idea of spending more time with you, because you've slowed my pace, which is important as a woman. You have to know when to slow his pace because you certainly can't rely on us to do it for you. You're slowing his pace, but you also really are making him feel great in the process.

When I say to you about how you do it, I don't mean you should be more lenient; I just mean the way that you communicate it will have a massive impact on the level of attraction that you get, and there is such a thing as being too honest.

Attendee: That's what I wanted. I wanted a tool, a better way of saying it. That's why I came today. That's what I wanted. I want that.

Matthew: Does that work for you? Do you like it?

Attendee: It totally works for me. That's exactly what I wanted.

Matthew: Those little moments there where you get to communicate it in that kind of a way, it changes everything. Are there any other moments like that that you can think of?

Attendee: I want to know what happens when the bill comes because I think that's a large part of dating these days. When the bill comes, I've heard all the different things. When is the guy supposed to pay? Is he supposed to pay on the first few dates? How does it work? How does that little dance work?

I was in the restaurant with my friend this week, and we were watching a couple, and what the girl did… My friend said, "Oh, my God, she's a master at this. Watch what happens." When the bill came, she kind of went to her purse and he just took it and he paid, and she never even have to offer. When he was done then she looked up. I said, "Is that masterful? Is she supposed to offer?" I don't understand.

In New York, especially in Manhattan, it's like women in these powerful positions and we can take care of ourselves. I for one can, but I would love to make a man feel needed and wanted and all that stuff. But then it's like men are always saying, "We take women out and we spend X amount of dollars, and drop that. If you're dating women throughout the month, it becomes such a burden. Can't a woman offer?"

I don't understand. It's too much information. What are we supposed to do? There are many experts who say many different things.

Matthew: Yeah. I'll tell you the right one.

Attendee: I'll see if yours works. I'm going to try it.

Matthew: There are a couple of things. Firstly, this is the background psychology to all of this stuff. It's no fun getting a gift for someone who always thought they were going to get a gift and that gift is received as something very casual and unimportant. If you gave someone a gift and they said, "Thanks so much. All right, what should we do next?" the impetus to do that again would be gone.

Now from a guy's point of view, it is slightly tough, because firstly, it's confusing to live in a world where everyone wants to be treated equal but then women go away and tell all their friends about you if you don't pay. It's a strange world, but I happen to like that aspect of it because I like being able to take care of someone in that way. I do enjoy it, and if someone fought me on it all the time, that would be exhausting for me because I like doing that.

The first rule is offer, because if you don't, there's a subtle message that it communicates. He knows all too well that this is the most polite you're ever going to be. You'll never be more polite than you are on the first date. If you're not even offering now, it means you're never offering.

In his head, it's, "If she's not offering now and this is the most polite she's ever going to be, I'm now living for two. I'm paying for two forever now," and that's a scary notion on a first date, so offer.

And I don't mean offer like, fumble, fumble, fumble, fumble, fumble, fumble. "Oh, you've got it. Okay." I mean take your purse and show that you're willing to pay half. Now some women will say at this point, "What if he lets me pay?" Then, that's a decision that's your decision now as to what you want to do with this man. This has nothing to do with him at this stage.

I don't agree with the whole "You invited me out, so you should pay." That sounds a lot like prostitution to me. To me, when someone says that, I always think to myself, "So your presence to me is a gift that I have to pay for, and that means my presence is what? We're unequal? We're not on the same footing here?" I think it's a strange message to send someone, that your time has to be purchased.

That's not to say that the gentleman's thing to do isn't to pay, because it is. But those two issues are separate to me. Shame on you if you feel entitled to be paid for. Shame on him if he invites you on a date and doesn't pay.

When you're there, offering allows a crucial moment to happen. He now gets to say, "No, no, no. Allow me." That moment is the moment he lives for. He lives for that moment where he gets to say, "No, I've got this." If he never gets to say, "No, I've got this," he has had no enjoyment from this moment at all. It's just him paying. But when he gets to say, "No," he gets to feel that important and the validation that comes from taking care of you.

Your next move is important, as well. It must not be shrugged off as a "Oh, thank you." That moment should be a moment where you make them feel good. It should be a moment where you say, "I really appreciate that. That's very kind of you. Thank you so much." It's in your tone.

He'll think, "Oh, I want to do this all the time. I want to do this all the time." Because by the way, especially in a city like New York, he's not used to people giving him that tone. By the way, when you buy someone dinner or drinks who you don't even know, that is a nice thing. Most people don't even do that for their brother.

Attendee: They don't. But it's just there's so much chatter out there about it. I talk to women about this all the time, and there is just such a back-and-forth and no one really knows what to do or what's the right thing.

Matthew: You hear all the time… I hear women always say, "I wouldn't go on a date and pay. I'm old-fashioned," and I think to myself, "That's fair enough that that's in the back of your mind, but if you're not offering, you're not even giving him the feeling of satisfaction." And don't expect a guy to keep doing something if he gets no satisfaction from doing it.

Attendee: Then if you go on a few dates with this person, then you should offer to do the cocktails first or something like that, or how does that work?

Matthew: There are a couple of different ways to do this. For example, if you take the movie example…

Attendee: That's the worst date.

Matthew: Not if you know each other.

Attendee: No, no, no. I'm not talking know each other.

Matthew: I would go to the movies with someone on a third date.

Attendee: Third date. Okay, fine.

Matthew: Or even on a second if I was just feeling like I didn't want to talk to them.

Attendee: Okay, we'll take third date to the movies. You're going to buy the popcorn, he's going to buy the tickets, you're all going to call it a day? I know, it's my logical mindset. I'm sorry. I have so many questions that I want to ask you. I know there are others, too. I just want to spit them all out. Sorry.

Matthew: That's one way, yes. But there is a third way, and that is every now and again when you show up to see him, bring him a little something. It's really sweet. Guys love this. If you got them something like, "I thought of you…" or you know he works out a lot, it's something cheap, whatever, and you say, "I thought you'd would want to try this. Apparently it's really good," those little moments just show that there is generosity flowing in both directions, instead of the mindset of, "He keeps paying, but I keep showing up and being there with him, so fair deal." Again, it sounds a lot like prostitution. That to me doesn't make any sense.

If you do want him to be chivalrous and if you do want him to enjoy paying for things, give him the satisfaction.

Here's one other thing, as well. It really won't hurt if you show that you're watching his wallet for him. This is really interesting. For example, if he was going to take you to this really expensive date or whatever, and he said, "Let's go here on Saturday," or something, every now and again just say to him, "Oh, that's so expensive. That's

a lot of money. We could just go to the park and take some food and whatever if you want. That would be fun, as well."

If he really wants to take you to this showy place and get the feeling of that, he'll still do it anyway. He'll still say to you, "No, no, no. I really want to take you." But guess what? He now is getting even more satisfaction from doing it because it's again that, "No, no, no. I want to take you."

But secondly, what he sees is, "Oh, wow. This is a real team player. This woman is a team player. This is someone who doesn't just mindlessly want to spend money. She actually is looking out for me in some way. Because that little gesture where she said, 'We don't have to do the expensive thing, we could do this instead,' shows me that she is going to be a teammate when we are together, as well," and that's a really powerful thing.

Next question?

Attendee: What about the texting? I know you're supposed to keep the texting really for logistical things, like where are we going to meet or the time we're going to meet or stuff like that, but what happens when it gets into that back-and-forth sort of conversation?

Then sometimes guys will go to the sexting stuff, as well, or a crazy clip will show up of comic porn or whatever, and you're like, "Dude, I just opened that up at work" or whatever. Not all guys. I'm just saying it happens.

Attendee: A lot of guys now just go to the texting.

Attendee: Especially the sexting. Even before that, where conversations are no longer conversations. Conversations are now these big long diatribes through a text, and it's so hard when you say, "Can you just call?" and they say, "I'm really tired." Well, you just spent a lot of energy really just typing all that out.

But we were all mentioning that before, especially with online dating where you say, "Okay, take my number." I'll even put it out there and say, "Give me a call if you want to do something." You give them your number and five seconds later, there's a text, "Hey, this is Brian."

Attendee: But why do they do that anyway?

Matthew: This is confusing because both sides have a point. Texting is not the end of the world, firstly. There are good times where texting really does work well. I know from personal experience when I'm busy and going about my day, it's always easier to text and flirt a little by text and all of that stuff. It also allows you, in a way, to keep in more regular contact, because you may not want to call someone three times a day but you will text them three or four times a day, so there's that.

There are areas where texting is really great. The danger is because it's so comfortable, it seduces us into that comfort consistently where we no longer now actually pick up the phone to make that phone call. Now, one thing you can do is go back to that model… You know where I said before about the woman who said, "I'm a little old-fashioned, so if you want to take me out, you should give me a call, LOL"? Strangely, although funny, it kind of is important sometimes to soften those messages, otherwise, they do look aggressive.

The same can be done here. Sometimes calling someone out a little bit helps – just a little bit, like in a playful way. You might either say, "You really don't like phone calls, do you?" or "You're not really a phone guy, are you?" Here's a slightly different way around it, actually. You could say you actually prefer this. "You're always texting. Give me a call when you get a minute so I can hear your voice. I miss your sexy voice." That's always a nice way to do it, as well. Give him some validation for something that you get on the phone that you don't get with him.

I've had this message before, and it made me want to do it instead of feeling I had to, where someone said to me, "I miss your sexy voice. Give me a call later on." Then it made me look forward to calling them, because it wasn't just, "Oh, call me because I'm sick of you texting." It was there's something about the phone call that is more enticing, more attractive. Don't condition him to make him feel like it's a chore. Actually build excitement around the phone call. That's one thing.

The other thing is don't shy away now and again from actually being the one to call. We have gotten to a place where I think unfortunately even a lot of guys feel like they shouldn't call. You may say, "I would so appreciate it if the guy called," but actually in a world where they're all so used to dealing with women who are dating a lot or busy or whatever, very often they often feel weird for calling, as well. "Am I going to be calling at a weird time? Is she going to think I'm weird if I pick up the phone to her?" Guys feel that, as well.

I know that I have appreciated it when I've seen a missed call from someone who I'm texting. "Oh wow, she actually tried to call me. That's really cool." I like it. It almost gives me permission to reach out and call her. "I'm going to call her back because she clearly wants to speak to me on the phone."

Don't be afraid. Even if you don't get through, him seeing a missed call from you can actually send him a message that you do want to hear from him by phone.

Attendee: I have a question about the phone, though. If you're out on a date and the guy is sitting there on his phone, how can you just politely say, "Hey, Swiper. No swiping?" Because when I'm out on a date, I'll give somebody my undivided attention.

Matthew: I see. There are different ways of doing this. Sometimes I like saying, "Oh, you're not one of those guys, are you?"

He'll say, "What guys?"

You'll say, "You know, your phone is your baby. You can't let it go. I'm sure you're not like this, but there are so many people who are so addicted to their phones. Do you know what I mean?" I'll say that. You can say that to someone.

They'll say, "Yeah. No, I know. That was my brother. I get it. I hate that, too."

You can call someone on it. If he's like that all the time, just say, "Uh-oh."

He'll say, "What."

You'll say, "Are you addicted to your phone? Is your phone your baby?"

Then he'll convince you that that's not the case. "Oh, no, no, no. That's not me."

That's one way to do that. You do have to call people on stuff. Not instantly. Don't rush to call people out on stuff. This is important, too. Don't rush to jump in and say, "Oh, you looked at your phone again?" Sometimes things are an anomaly and you have to see if there's a pattern first.

It's almost like if someone was late for a date, I'm not going to stress about it. I'm actually more interested in whether they're apologetic than the fact that they were late, because every one of us can be late.

If they came in and they said, "I'm so sorry. I got stuck on something," or whatever… But if they didn't acknowledge it, that's like a big red flag to me. If they acknowledge it, okay, let's move on. Now if they did it for another date or a third date, that's the moment where I would call someone out on it and I would have something to say.

There was someone who I remember who on a Sunday night had said, "I really want to see you. Can we do something tomorrow night?"

I said, "Okay, sure."

She said, "Okay, great. I'm going to text you tomorrow," and then she didn't text me.

I thought, "Okay, whatever." I didn't think anything of it.

The following week it was a Thursday and she said, "I really want to see you tomorrow."

I said, "Okay, great. What time are you thinking?"

She said "2:00."

I said, "Okay."

It got to 12:00 and then she texted me and said, "I got up late. My whole day got pushed back. It might need to be a bit later."

I said, "Okay. What time are you thinking?" Because I'm chill. I don't show stress in those ways because to me it just makes you unattractive.

She said, "I have a couple of things. I have something at 4:00 and something at 5:00. I'll call you in the next hour."

Then I just texted her back, and for playfulness, I used her last name. Let's say it's Smith. I said, "You know what? I'm a little crazy for the rest of the day, but that's fine. We can pick another day." And then at the end of the message, I put, "You're so flaky these days, Smith." It was done with a wink, but it was my way of calling her out.

She then texted back and said, "Flaky???" You know when someone gets immediately on the defensive? "Flaky???" with three question marks. We were three question marks deep.

Again, I don't take bait like that. I just said, "You disagree?"

She said, "Totally. I was the one who asked you to do something, not the other way around. If you miss me, just say that, but don't call me flaky."

Most people at this point get sucked into some sort of thing with someone. I don't play that game. I said, "Last week, you asked me to do something the day before and then you didn't even text me. And last night you asked me to do something today, and then told me this morning you can't make the time. That's a little flaky. And by the way, of course I miss you. That's why I'm saying 'yes.'"

Can you see how that's a bit of a unique pairing in itself? On one hand, I'm sticking to my guns and calling her out? I'm not creating a problem. I'm just trying to say, "This is why I'm saying it." But then what I'm doing is she doesn't get into an ego battle because I say to her, "Of course I miss you. That's why I'm saying 'yes.'"

Now you have that unique combination of her feeling like there's some standard of mine that she's breaking, which, by the way, isn't a big deal. I've done worse to people. I know I've done worse. I'm not a hypocrite. But when I'm treating someone that way, I know it's because I'm not respecting them enough and I know it's because I'm juggling them with all these other things. That's fine, but I'm not going to be juggled. There are plenty of guys you can juggle. I'm just not one of them.

If you're going to ask me to do something, let's just do that thing, or just don't ask me. I'm fine either way. But because I tell her, "Of course I miss you, that's why I'm saying 'yes,'" that's the part that allows her without pride to come around, and the next message I got was, "I didn't see it that way. I totally get it." Now she's on board with me.

When someone gets on board with you like that, don't keep punching them. She's on board with me. The next message I sent was, "It's fine, no big deal. Just don't keep getting my hopes up about seeing one of my favorite people and then disappearing." Now she's melting.

I'm not trying to make her feel bad. I'm just trying to tell her this is my standard, that's all. I'm not trying to make you feel bad. I don't want an argument. That's my standard. Then when I say she's one of my favorite people and just don't keep getting my hopes up about me seeing one of my favorite people and then disappearing, then it allows us to really come together.

Literally the next message I got was "I'm canceling my nail appointment. I'll see you in 30 minutes." I had to text back and say, "Whoa, whoa. I just moved the personal trainer to an hour earlier because I thought I wasn't seeing you. We would only have an hour at best to see each other."

We're getting into Jedi shit right now. The next thing I sent her was, "I don't want to squeeze you in an hour, so I understand if you don't want to. We can do it another day." The next message I got was "I'm on my way."

This is why to me what we're talking about here today is so important, I'll guarantee you under different circumstances, I would have been treated really poorly by this person. If I had not constructed my language in that way, if I didn't know how to assert that standard and at the same time, be kind and make that person feel good, that person would have carried on treating me in a very flaky way. It doesn't mean I would have never seen her again; it just would have always been on her terms.

That is why so many of the things that happen to us, we must not take personally, because very often it has nothing to do with us; it has to do with the standard that we are portraying. What standard am I portraying right now about the behavior that I will and will not accept?

For me there are three levels to this: having a standard, not being afraid to communicate that standard, and knowing how to communicate that standard. Having a standard, not being afraid to communicate it, and knowing how to communicate it – those three things are what you need for a relationship.

The "how" part is really important, because you can lose the right people by doing the wrong "how." Many people I know have standards, and when they try to communicate them, they don't think about these things.

Attendee: Going back to the "how," I think that probably my biggest thing is how to communicate it. There is one little tool that you gave. But on a daily basis then, how do I figure it out if I don't have you in my back pocket? On everyday conversation…

Matthew: It's funny you should say that.

Attendee: Because on everything else, I can communicate when it comes to work and job and friends. It all works there, but for some reason when it goes into the dating, something is not communicating right.

Matthew: It's funny you should say that.

Attendee: I can put you in my back pocket?

Matthew: I have been working on something recently with my brother, because that to me is the one thing we know exactly what we are talking about there but it's hard. You want all of the answers. You want all of the "hows" for every situation, so we have been putting together this program called "How to Talk to Men," which is different from our other programs because the whole idea of this program instead of being lots and lots of psychology, it's scripts.

It's very small chapters because they're not supposed to be us telling you the psychology behind all of these things. It's literally I think 51 chapters or something like that. But all of them are like this because each one gives a situation and a script, or two scripts or three scripts in some cases, for that situation. We'll go through more today, of course. That's why we're here, but that's something that I will have very soon for you.

But by all means, let's talk more scenarios. We'll go around. I know each of you has something.

Attendee: I just wrote down, for instance, I had a date set up with a guy, and he had to cancel because his allergies were really bad. I was like, "No problem." At first, he said he had to cancel it because he didn't feel…

Matthew: I know. I can see you laughing, "Of course, his allergies."

Attendee: He sent me a text. Here's the kicker. He texts me in the morning. He said, "I might have to cancel. I'm not feeling that well."

I said, "Okay, no worries. Actually, I'd rather you cancel. I'd rather not get sick. Let's pick a time when you feel better."

He said, "It's not contagious. It's actually I have bad allergies."

"Oh, okay."

He said, "I'll let you know by 3:00."

"All right." So 3:00 rolls around…

Matthew: What time was the date supposed to be?

Attendee: It was supposed to be after work, so 5:30. By 3:00, he had said that his allergies were so bad, and he had to go away on Monday. "Okay. Whatever." Cancels.

Sunday night he sends me another text. "Hey, how was your weekend?"

I texted back something to the effect of, "Hey Captain Claritin. I hope everything went well. It was great. How was yours?"

He wrote back, "Good, smiley face."

I don't know where he went. That was it. I'm like, "Are you just checking in and make sure I filled my time well, or you're just weird?"

Matthew: Why do guys do that? Why do they text that on a Sunday?

Attendee: I think that he was trying to get back in, just by based on what you said at the last…

Attendee: Why doesn't he ask to get together again?

Matthew: Do you think that might be giving him a lot of credit?

Attendee: I don't know.

Attendee: He was bored.

Attendee: I don't know.

Attendee: He had nothing else to do. I don't know. I thought he would be texting to say, "When do you want to get together again?" to which I would have responded with what my schedule was or when I'm free or whatever.

Attendee: If you make plans with a guy, they fall through for whatever reason, and he gets back in touch with you but doesn't make any illusion to actually wanting to make plans again, so it's "Why are we talking?"

Matthew: Why is he? I'm asking.

Attendee: No, I don't know, either. It's your guess is as good as mine. "Why are you…?"

Attendee: He knows, Matt, he knows.

Matthew: Well, I…

Attendee: Obviously.

Matthew: We all have our lonely moments, right? We all have our moments where we want some connection. I think one of the aspects of the world we live in today is we have that superficial connection at our fingertips if we want it. People can go on Tinder and have a few conversations. They can text someone that they haven't even had a date with yet. It's so noncommittal, but at the same time, they might be able to get a little validation here and there.

For the person on the other end who actually wants a date out of it, that can be a very confusing thing, because you feel someone reach out, you think they may want something, and then they don't actually ask. You're the one who is on the edge all the time, thinking, "Are you going to ask? Are you going to ask?"

If someone was constantly getting in touch with me, and it was never materializing, I know that at some point I might allude to… I'm always going to try and shine a light on the situation a little bit, sooner or later – and never in a way of being aggressive, because, as I said, I'm always super casual. You don't owe me anything, so I'm not going to get aggressive with you. You don't owe me anything; I don't even know you. But, I might every now and again shine a light on it by saying…

For example, when I'm halfway through a question and you jumped in and you went like, "Da, da, da, da, da," if I wanted to allude to it, I might have said, "You are so demanding. All right. Come on." That's a nice little technique, because in that moment, I get to shine a light and at the same time, I'm kind of the one making the joke. Actually, we're all part of that joke, and it becomes a fun moment but you also shine a light.

I would be doing that with the guy, as well. I would shine a light on it and be like, "I barely remember what you look like. Where are you?" Let him feel like, "Oh yeah, me and this person maybe haven't even met." Or whatever. "I'm starting to think you might be a robot," or "I'm starting to think you might be a computer program, because we've never met in person."

Or you could say, "I still am left wondering if you're as charming in person as you are by text," and see how he responds to that. Or "This is turning in to one of those cyber relationships that everyone bitches about" – not "that I bitch about," "that everyone bitches about."

Sometimes I might do it this way. I might say, "We're the worst," because really what you mean is "You're the worst." I might say, "Oh no, this is turning in to one of those weird text-only relationships. We're the worst. We should cut our losses now before we end up hating ourselves," or "I tell you what. Let's not text again for six months. I'll see you in six months."

Even sometimes I will do stuff like this just as a social experiment, because what do I have to lose? You're not asking me on a date anyway, so I might as well play with you here and see what happens.

I would do that more if I were you. I would play around more with these guys. Don't sit there waiting, thinking, "What's their next move? What are they going to do?" Be prepared. Fuck with them a little bit and see how they respond.

Attendee: I guess my question – because I want to just wrap up me; I think I'm getting some good solid questions for everyone – is I want to know…

Matthew: Hold up. This is interesting. I want everyone to pay attention to this, because we're learning in real time here. The only reason that she felt the need to say that is because I had shone a light on it minutes before that. Now, in reality, I'm perfectly for you to ask and ask and ask and ask and ask – of course, that's what we're here for –but because I have put a light on it, then she becomes aware, she

becomes conscious of something, which then led Jennifer to a point where she thinks, "Oh, maybe I should be wary of this."

That's exactly what you're looking for with the guy. It's "I can shine a light on something in a way that actually builds value, builds attraction, and puts this consciously on your radar to a point where you now wouldn't want to do this."

That person who was flaky with me that day was never flaky again. I'm sure she's still flaky with a whole bunch of other people in her life, but with me, she was never flaky again. It's just interesting because exactly that dynamic, that's what I want you to create.

Attendee: I was going to ask: what can I do?

Matthew: What can you do?

Attendee: What should I tweak to, if I'm interested in a guy, to get it more than just one date? Since it seems to be a pattern that I've fallen in to lately. You don't really know me that well.

Matthew: No, but there are those moments on a date… Firstly just to go back to that point, those are the moments where I think you will build a lot more attraction. Because rather than going to that very logical place, which can leave me feeling like I've been put through the ringer a little bit, instead, if you can soften that by both asserting your standard – sometimes in a playful way – but at the same time as showing him attraction and sweetness and femininity, then you have something that he will want to latch on to.

I don't know this about you, but my fear is your brutal honesty and how that might be scaring some people in certain situations, because sometimes that brutal honesty can get in the way of the romance of things, which can be really beautiful in the beginning. That would be one guess.

Now, perhaps for you, we need to focus more on connecting with the people who you are going on dates with, because right now, it seems like you're collecting stories at a rapid rate.

Attendee: I have a lot of stories, definitely, and there are some guys I'm just not interested in connecting with. I do think I have a higher probability of dating someone that I really do connect with, because I go out with more guys so there are just going to be more losses. We have more losses the more amount of people you go out with.

But I like to give myself the option because I like meeting people in general. I just like being out there. I'd rather be out and about doing things than sitting in my apartment. It's just who I am at the core, and I have always been like that.

Matthew: What do you normally talk about on dates?

Attendee: What do I normally talk about? Oh, my gosh, it could be anything – what you like to do for fun, and the travels, and the food. Sometimes there's joking around. Sometimes it's about family.

Chemistry is a large part of it, I guess. Sometimes they're boring dates, sometimes they're really fun and exciting. I guess it's like you said; it's like a team effort in a sense. Sometimes it'll be like 20 questions and it's just fun questions going back and forth, like "What's your favorite pizza topping?" to "What sports did you play when you were younger and why did you play them? What do you do now to keep in shape? Do you like the calamari we're eating?" I don't know.

Are these not good things?

Matthew: No, not at all. They work just fine. What are you passionate about?

Attendee: I have a little sister from the Big Brothers, Big Sisters program, who's amazing. I got her when she was 12, and she's now 24. Her mom died, and I raised her in a sense. It started out as a mentor, and it's now a big sister/mom type of role. I'm very proud of her in everything that I'm able to give to her, and it really shows what someone can do when they have the right support behind them, and she's a huge part of my life.

We're going to Costa Rica in April and I love traveling. Last year, I went to Cuba and Zimbabwe, South Africa, and I love…

Matthew: What do you hate in life?

Attendee: What do I hate in life?

Matthew: Really hate?

Attendee: Really hate?

Matthew: What pisses you off?

Attendee: What pisses me off? Rude, nasty people.

Matthew: What do you mean?

Attendee: Just people who are in general just rude and nasty. I live in Manhattan. I see it every day. I see the best of people and I see the worst of people. I just think everyone deserves some kindness, and I like being funny and fun.

Matthew: Like what? What do you mean when someone's rude?

Attendee: Gosh. What do I mean? I guess just someone being nasty to somebody else, and I see a lot of it in what I do. I guess this is going to be very telling right here. I used to be an event planner for 13 years, at different venues, and I also traveled around, all around the United States, and somewhat internationally. In one company, I worked with a team, and a lot of them were guys, and we'd go to all these different destinations, and I'd watch these guys cheat on their girlfriends and their wives all the time.

It's funny because I was actually one of the only women, and I ran the whole show, and I would watch this all the time – all these guys. I have worked very hard to put it behind me because I think seeing that all the time gave me this impression that guys always cheat and guys suck and whatever. That was very hard.

And fighting. I guess the fighting comes from somewhat growing up and seeing a lot of that in my household.

Matthew: Between your mom and dad?

Attendee: Yes, which is why I think I went the opposite way with being so friendly and so outgoing and so personable with people, and always like everyone to laugh and have fun. Obviously, we all have something that shapes where we are today and why we're here. There's something behind it, that fear. I've done a lot of self-work in the last several years, and that's where I'm at right now.

Matthew: I feel like the last minute or two of you speaking was much more interesting than the first two minutes. I think that's because somehow when you started… I asked you what you were passionate about, and you told me about is it the Big Sister program?

Attendee: Yeah.

Matthew: I found myself thinking, "So what?" I didn't care about it, and I didn't care about it not because it wasn't important, but I didn't care about it because I felt like I was hearing your idea of what you should say, instead of hearing from you.

In the last two minutes, when you started talking about how going on those trips affected you – which I can relate to and I understand exactly what you mean – when you started talking about that, I started to think, "Oh, this is more interesting." Then when you started talking about even your mum and dad fighting, I thought, "This is interesting."

In a way, the contrast of that with the other stuff… See, I feel at this stage like if we actually then had some time together, I could get to know who you actually are – your sensitivities and some of the things that I feel you would be really, really passionate to talk to me about for better or worse, even if they were bad things – and that, to me, is what really allows us to connect.

Attendee: But you can't talk about those things that made you connect with me – because we're in this setting – I can't talk about that on a date. "Oh yeah, I saw guys. They're just cheating on their girlfriends and wives all the time, and my parents fought when I grew up." I would be out the door in two seconds.

Matthew: People say that you shouldn't… I think it was Mark Twain, I think, who said three subjects you shouldn't discuss at the dinner people are religion, politics, and sex. I couldn't disagree more. You've just essentially taken three of the most interesting subjects there are off the table. What else would we talk about? I don't know. I could talk about those three subjects all day, every day. I have no fear of talking about those subjects when I first meet people, because somehow it allows me to be passionate and it allows me to break the ice in a completely different way.

When I stand up in a seminar with a bunch of people I don't know and I start completely hating on star signs, from half the audience, I get this look – "How dare you?" My team are always really funny because they'll say, "Why do you need to say it? We know you hate astrology. Why even say it? Why turn off half of your audience when you say that? Just don't say it."

I say, "No, no, no. It's important to me to turn off half the audience. I like doing it. I like creating that moment of tension in the room. I like being passionate. I like those moments where I get to say something that is revealing about me. I feel like the audience finishes that day knowing me a hell of a lot better than when they came in."

Certainly, they can lose some of their preconceptions about me, maybe some of their romanticism about me. They can lose some of that. But what it allows me to do is actually connect.

Let's take a business example. In business, if it's someone in my industry, they'll say, "When I was blah, blah, blah, I was down and out, and now I've done this, and I'm saying this because I want you to be able to do it too and blah, blah, blah." Everyone has this narrative that is supposed to sound authentic and genuine and win people over.

But so many people are putting out this narrative, we watch them and we think, "Okay." But every once in a while, someone comes through who something about the way they talk really does feel like they mean what they say and they're not bullshitting you. They're not trying to sound like somebody. They just are expressing their voice.

I would love to see on a date for you that real authenticity and vulnerability expressed. Sometimes when we date too much, we create a dating persona, and that dating persona becomes very hard to connect with.

You can come off a date where someone has told you so much about themselves and yet you feel like you know them no better than when you went in. They've told you they have a cat, they've told you they live in a certain part of town, they told you they have two brothers who they really care about. They've told you all of this stuff, and somehow something about it doesn't connect.

And yet, there's someone who can go on a date with you and tell you nothing of their life… Strangely, I experience this a lot because when I go on a date, I don't talk about my life for the first date or two. They won't even know my last name because the last thing I want is to go on a date and someone then goes and Googles me and spends five hours watching my videos before the next date. Can you imagine?

It's like you want to be at the same level as someone all the time, but they can literally go and discover so much… They can go and have 20 dates without you, with you, online, before seeing you again. Then you come back and you know this about them and they know… It's not a nice thing.

I will, for as long as possible, avoid… I'll tell someone I give presentation skills, events, or whatever. I say my name is Matthew, and I don't give them the information they would need to go and find out who I am.

But it doesn't stop me connecting because still when someone says, "Have you got any TV shows you love?" and I say, "Have you seen True Detective?" and they say, "Yeah." and I say, "I'm just obsessed with this show. I just love it. I love this show. I love so many of the messages in that show."

"What are the messages?" "The whole thing about blah, blah, blah." But there's a way that I say it where I really am expressing myself through this thing that I like. Have you seen *Guardians of the Galaxy*? *Guardians of the Galaxy* is, if you haven't seen it, I guess it's kind of

a boy movie, but it's amazing. I loved this movie. It was great, right? You have to see it.

There's a theater in LA, and I forget what it's called, but it's a 4D theater. You go in and you sit in these seats and there are all these things. They take the movie and do all of these extra things on top of it. When the spaceship is crashing, it will blow smoke out into the theater, your seat moves. When someone gets wet, you get wet. They've been in theme parks before but this is actually a movie theater.

There's a tree in this movie, one of the characters is a tree – I'm really selling it – and there's a moment where the tree, who you actually fall in love with, Groot, he opens his hands, and all these lights, these little twinkly lights come out of his hands in the movie. It's this really beautiful moment in the movie.

The theater in this moment, all of a sudden, when the little lights were on the screen and it was creating this beautiful moment, thousands and thousands of bubbles came out of the ceiling and streamed into the theater, and there were these bubbles everywhere. I'm not even exaggerating. I started crying.

Because it's a beautiful moment in the movie anyway, isn't it? And then the bubbles came out. I've got goose bumps as I'm saying it. The bubbles came out and I got really emotional because it was just like a really beautiful moment. That sounds crazy but that to me is like I want to spend my life creating those types of moments for other people, as well.

The thing that drives me even at work is how do we create those little moments in life? I think life is all about those moments where you just find yourself crying and you didn't expect it, and you're really caught off guard. That can tell you something about me that you wouldn't learn if I told you I love *Guardians of the Galaxy* or if I told you I love movies, which is unbelievably generic.

I don't need to tell you what I do or where I'm from or how many brothers I have or whatever to tell you something about how I operate

in life or what matters to me. If I tell you about that silly moment where it made me get really teary, it tells you something about me.

I can only be the expert based on how much I know. Saving being on the date with you, that's part of the impression that I got, and I think the more I saw you open up just then, the more I got a sense of your beauty and the more connected I felt to you. I feel more connected for having had that very small conversation than I did with you telling me about the Big Sister program and all of that. I feel much more connected to you.

There are a few things that make us want to call someone and go on a second date. One of them is we saw them when we had great sex. If we had a really good time with them in the bedroom, there's a good chance we want to see them again, even if it's just for the same thing, even if not to get to know them better.

Another thing that makes us want to call someone is when we actually miss them, when we miss their character, when we miss something about them. There are people that even on a nonsexual level, I miss. I miss them because there's something about their nature that I want around me, but you can only get that when you really learn their nature.

Again, if I'm way off the mark, I accept it, but it may be that something that would be interesting for you to focus on is really helping people get a sense of your deeper character – through the stories that you tell or the things that you get excited about – and not thinking ahead of time what would sound right, but instead just from a much more raw place, thinking, "What do I actually believe? What do I actually feel?"

Everyone has some funny, quirky stuff, even if it's silly. It doesn't always have to be deep. It could be the fact that I can't go to the movie theater without buying 50 different food items to go in with.

Attendee: Just sneak in Starbucks in a bag. I really do. Then I open it up and the Starbucks is all over the place.

Matthew: To me, there's flavor in these things, and that's the thing that really does connect us with someone. There's nothing weird about you. This is what you have to remember. There's nothing weird about you, there's no weird thing that you're going through, that means you're not getting a relationship. You're a perfectly beautiful, healthy person who is out there dating people, and there are lots of people that want to do more than date you.

Don't be in your head about an issue that doesn't exist on the level that you think it does. You're not an anomaly. I want you to stop with that story, with that narrative, because you're not an anomaly. Sometimes we're literally a millimeter off; that's it.

Attendee: I feel like I possibly am, and that's why I wanted to know. This is really great stuff, and I'm sure there's so much more that you could tell me if you got to know me more. That's why I came for this one-on-one type of stuff, because I think it's so much more poignant. Sitting in your audience is great when it's the 500 women…

Matthew: It's a different feeling, right?

Attendee: But it's totally different. I've been there and I brought a friend back to another one, and I've given your book to my little sister, and everyone who I've told has said, "Oh, my God, I listen to him on the radio. I can't believe you're going." I got a billion texts this morning. "Have fun. Go. Ask a lot of questions. Da da da da da." And the whole thing.

Matthew: This is interesting, and don't humor me here, but I don't know how to say this without having you agree with me for the sake of it. Please don't agree with me for the sake of it; only agree if you really do. Do you feel an energy change with her in the last few minutes?

Attendee: Yeah, 100%. Yeah.

Attendee: Yeah.

Matthew: There's a very subtle difference. I don't know if you feel it or notice it, but there's a very subtle difference in your energy where I really feel more connected to this you than from a few minutes

ago. I can feel it. I'm not saying it for the sake of it. I feel differently talking to you now. I think that part of this for you is getting yourself to a place of allowing yourself to be a little more vulnerable, allowing yourself to be a little more exposed.

I know you're putting yourself out there, and that's one form of vulnerability, but the vulnerability can go deeper than that, and the honesty that I was talking about can be a sense of not wanting to be vulnerable…

Attendee: Totally true.

Matthew: **…**Masked as let me just be really upfront with you. Especially in those moments where a guy is putting you in a slightly vulnerable position of wanting to come to your place or whatever, any of those things, there are situations that potentially could expose you, make you vulnerable, where you don't want to show weakness that could be taken advantage of.

Attendee: Yes, and that's from all of my fear of all of my experiences.

Matthew: All of the things with men you've learnt.

Attendee: Absolutely. 100%. I don't know how to do it. You can acknowledge all these things and know all of these things – and a lot of us know all these things about ourselves – but it's then the tools to be able to transform, and that's what I'm seeking. I know a lot of this about myself; I just need more tools to do it a different way, and it's all about the tools.

Matthew: Understood. It's a great question. You know what?

Attendee: How do you do it?

Matthew: Part of this is there's a simple tool, which is to say… When I'm with Jameson and I see someone I like, and I tell Jameson I think that person is attractive, I accept beforehand that this might go wrong, and I might have some embarrassment here, and this person might reject me in front of everyone. Jameson will tell you. We literally will stand there, and he'll see that moment where I say, "Jameson, I cannot not do it."

Even for that moment where I had to go back to get the number, I'm prepared to look silly and I'm prepared for you to reject me, and I know it won't feel good when you do. I'm not going to pretend, "Oh, I can go and do it and when you reject me, who cares? I don't care, blah, blah, blah." I used to say that kind of thing, but of course, it hurts.

But I know that you can't hurt me more than I allow you to, and I know that at the end of the day, even if someone cheats on me or does something awful, I know that I'm a good person and I know that I have a lot to offer, and I know that I'll recover.

Even though it will hurt so much – and it really will – you're bound to meet more of those men that go on trips and screw whoever they want when they're on these trips despite who they're hurting back home, of course, but that's not all people and sometimes you experience those, and even those, we give them more power than they really have, because at the end of the day, they're only more needy and secure people who need their validation and all of that have an unattractive way of going about it.

But it's almost just getting okay with the idea that someone may take advantage of you and saying, "All right, part of the game that I am in is that this is likely to happen." In a way, once you accept that there will always be a percentage of people who will take advantage and you stop relentlessly trying to make sure no one can take an inch, it's really freeing. It's really, really freeing because you go, "Okay, fair enough…"

There was a time recently where someone hustled us. I can't remember where it was. I can't remember, but my dad was funny. I was telling him this story of this hustle that happened to me, and he was telling me a story of way back when in New York. He came to New York and he was with a bunch of people he worked with and they were doing it big, and they had this limousine, and they were going to this club.

It was one of the top nightclubs at the time, and as the limousine pulled up, a guy opened the door and said, "Gentlemen," and helped

them out of the car and whatever. He said, “Okay lads, if you want to walk straight through to the front, if you want to avoid doing the whole line and everything, it’s going to be $200 a head, and we’ll take care of you and make sure you’re all set up inside.”

The lads all looked at each other and went, “Well, we’re here. Let’s just do it right.” All of them gave them money. He said, “Okay,” and he took them to the side entrance, and he said, “Let me grab the manager. I’ll see you in a sec.” They waited at this door for ten minutes and then went to the front door and said, “Your man has us waiting at the back door, just waiting for the manager.”

“Who?” They said, “The guy. There was a guy in a suit. He was in a suit and tie standing there. He was big dude.” “I don’t know who you’re talking about.” It wasn’t even a club hustle. The guy didn’t even work at the club. The guy was just a guy who opened their limousine, took their cash, and went.

The funny thing was my dad wasn’t angry. He said, “We looked at each other and we just couldn’t stop laughing.” He said, “Fair play to him. He had the suit and tie and everything. He didn’t look like a homeless guy who was helping them out. This guy was dressed to the nines standing out of the club, helped us out the limousine.”

He said, “You have to put your hands up and say, ‘All right, fair enough.’” That attitude, to me, was really revealing. It was really revealing because I know a certain type of person that wouldn’t get over that shit. There are plenty of people I know who if that happened to them, their bitterness would be inconceivable. They wouldn’t even be able to carry on with their night and have a good night, let alone laugh about it afterwards. They would be so angry.

To me, that’s the difference between people who are prepared to be vulnerable and accept that there will be times in life where it doesn’t pay off and people who are always trying to protect themselves, because that person who says, “I will never get burnt like this again,” now will close down to so many different things. They’ll become a different person in the process, as well. They’ll become angry, they’ll become bitter, they’ll become more standoffish with people.

When you talk about tools, it is true that there are so many different things that I could give you to say. But what I'm getting at even more than that is I would just like to see you be vulnerable and really express yourself in a vulnerable way and be okay with the fact that there are going to be times when someone takes advantage.

I'm not saying let everyone in to be able to do damage, because of course, we still have to be smart about who we let in to our lives. But vulnerability is really truly attractive, and especially when you first go on a date with someone, to get a sense of who someone really is allows you to miss them, because you really do have the sense that you're on a date with another human being who is in some way connected to you through their human experience.

I hope I'm making sense. I don't mean this to sound abstract. It really is important. The last thing I would ever want from my work is for people to then get prescriptive and feel like now they have to say all of these things and put forward this version of themselves all the time. No, there's strength in really being honest about your opinions on things and who you are, and showing when something hurts you a little bit.

Even sometimes, "I was looking forward to you texting me." Sometimes we're so nervous about being seen as needy or not in control that we don't say things that actually could humanize us a little bit. I will say to someone, "I was looking forward to your text today and I didn't get anything. Let's talk next week."

I've still shown that I'm in control because I'm not then asking the question, "Where are you? What are you doing?" I'm in control enough to say, "We'll talk next week," or "We'll talk another day," but I'm also okay with showing them that something they did had an impact on me, which is actually a nice compliment to pay someone.

Let's say I'm seeing someone tomorrow. I may send a message to them tonight, saying, "I'm thinking of you. I'm looking forward to seeing you tomorrow." Most people won't do that because they want to seem like they're completely in control and "I'm too cool for school" or whatever, but actually, you know what? Sometimes that

little bit of sweetness really does go a long way, and it humanizes us in a world where everyone is increasingly seeming less human.

Texting, Tinder, Facebook, online dating – all of this in a strange turn of irony is making us seem less human and more amorphous. We're all blending together a little bit. Do you know what I mean? You like skiing? I can go online and find a thousand people who like skiing. You travel here? I can go online and find a thousand people.

Do you know what a guy said to me the other day? This is a friend of friend, and he summed in a very crude way, but I have to say there was some truth to it, and this is true of both sexes. He said, "When a woman is being annoying on Tinder or whatever. I have 2000 more in my pocket. What do I need to put up with that for?" When you think about that, it gives you some clue as to why we're all so much less patient.

We have no patience anymore with anyone for anything, because we're just onto the next, onto the next, onto the next, onto the next. We all have this breadth and no depth. I think the antidote is humanizing yourself.

Attendee: With the vulnerability?

Matthew: Yes. Vulnerability and also empathy, because we live in a world now where empathy has been eroded, as well. It's so easy to reject without ever seeing the consequences of the rejection. You really don't need to worry about people's reactions to things any more.

Attendee: That was going to my question, just only to follow up with hers, almost to bring it round circle. What she's talking about is the beginning. My question was going to be where it ends. We were talking about this a little bit before. How do you process and eventually recover from the break-up text?

Matthew: That you get? There are a couple of important things here. The first, know when to be less attracted to someone. I'll give you an example. When I sent that message to the person who was flaky,

her immediate response, when she first said, “Flaky?” my immediate emotion was disappointment. I was really disappointed.

I didn’t say this to her because actually this would have been hurtful for her to hear, because I wasn’t trying to be hurtful. But the reality was I was disappointed because I really liked and respected this person, and one of the things that I really don’t respect in life is when someone can’t just put it on the table and be like, “You know what? Yeah. I was shitty this week.” I’m the best forgiver in the world, but what I don’t like is when people can’t accept something or when they can’t take responsibility.

My immediate response was first disappointment and then loss of attraction, because I really was un-attracted to her in that moment. When, after the next couple of texts, she came back and said, “You know what? I totally get it. When I look at it like that, I totally get it. I’m sorry,” my attraction was back; I felt attracted to her again. But before that, it wasn’t just that I was frustrated with her flakiness or hurt by her flakiness; I genuinely had lost attraction for this person.

My first response to you is when you get that message and someone decides to handle you in that way – their approach has a lack of empathy or class – that would be a moment where they would depart from being someone who I would miss a lot in the future in any case.

Attendee: Yeah, but if you’ve been seeing them for a year?

Matthew: Even more so. If I’d been seeing them for five years, even more so. Now, I’m not saying it’s easy, but I would say that would be one of my first reactions. I would remind myself this is an ugly thing that someone has done. I may be sitting here right now mourning, saying, “This person could have been someone really special to me.” Guess what? I would be looking at it and saying, “The person who I would be with, the teammate who I would want for the rest of my life, would they do something like this? Would they act in this way?

And if the answer is no… Because by the way, is that the person you want when the shit hits the fan? When things go wrong in a relationship or when something bad is happening, when someone’s in trouble, do you want that person? What he’s demonstrated in that

message is that he's someone who would rather take the easy way than the right way.

He would rather take a way that's comfortable to him and much more painful to you than do something that would be painful for him to do and speak to you and go through it, and have to see the effect. He'd rather take the road that's easy for him and hard for you.

Now you have to ask yourself how much you lost if that that was the person who you were going to be with long term, because he could have done that on something much worse. They could have been much bigger problems that he decided to take the easy road that was comfortable for him, painful for you. That's someone who I, from a distance, have to be glad is not in your life any more.

Now, does that stop you missing someone? No. Does it stop you feeling lonely? No. Does it stop you feeling hurt that they did that? No. But there's a difference in the type of pain. I've said this before. One type of pain is the agony of feeling like you lost your soul mate; the other type of pain is the disappointment that they didn't turn out to be your soul mate. I can live with the second type. The second type is still fucking painful; it still hurts really badly. That's just the sort of hurt that I want you to put yourself up for, by the way.

Attendee: Should I be crying?

Matthew: But this is real.

Attendee: That's why I don't do it.

Matthew: And you should do it.

Attendee: I block off so I don't ever get…

Matthew: But you should, because this is real and this is what it is to be alive, this is what it is to be human, and it's a beautiful, beautiful thing. Don't shy away from it because it gets better, and it gets easier, and you never think it will, and it does, and you never think there will be someone and there is. It gets easier – it does – and this feeling right now, I promise you, won't matter to you anywhere near as much a year from now or two years from now or five years from now. It just

won't. By the way, enjoy it now, because it won't last forever. Enjoy it, relish it, embrace it.

But this is what I want you to go for. This is what it is to be human, but there is a difference between losing your soul mate, and losing the idea of someone being your soul mate, and I think what you've experienced is the second one, so I'm not worried about you.

Let's keep going for a moment. Let's start with you.

Attendee: I was just going to say. I guess it feels like the other type of pain that you were talking about. I wanted to phrase it as how can I express that I can see a relationship, that I'm willing to do whatever it takes to overcome obstacles such as distance or other obstacles without feeling like I'm trying to convince someone of a relationship or sell the relationship in that sense?

Or is that in itself that I have to even think about "Is this as a sign that…?"

Matthew: I was going to say: you may have to convince me that he's what you say he is first.

Attendee: Okay. Obviously, I met a guy – in October. He doesn't live here; he lives five and a half hours away, which isn't terrible, but the obstacles are he is divorced and he has two kids, and his work schedule is really inconsistent. Unpredictable is the word.

He feels like his priorities should be… His one daughter is older, she's already away in college, but the other one is 13, and he feels like his priority should be here, and he feels like it wouldn't be fair to me because he wouldn't be able to make me a priority, which is how we initially started, which was fine. It wasn't fine, but I was like, "Well, I need to do my own thing and that's great, and I enjoy you, but I need to think about my long-term happiness."

In the meantime, I still tried to date other people and when he does travel to New York and we do spend some time together, it's just gotten exponentially better and we have this amazing connection, and he's a wonderful guy.

So I had a conversation with him about making more of an investment, to see where we could go and where we could bring the relationship, and he basically was like that he hadn't thought of it the way that I put it, and he wanted to think about how he could respond best. In the next two weeks, I noticed his actions more of an investment and he was just being a lot more open and more frequent with his calls and just being more proactive about us getting together and things like that, but he never actually gave me a response.

Then I gave it about two weeks, and my way of bringing it up again – this is true – I just said, "I do get asked out by other guys, and obviously my preference is to be with you, but I don't really know how to proceed in that sense." His response was, "I don't want you to date anyone else for selfish reasons but I don't want you to miss out on other opportunities."

He says, "My life isn't going to change very much, at least not in the next four years. I can't move to New York right now. I have to be here for my daughter." It's all about his changes, but I guess if there's never…

There are things I could do, too. I could visit him sometimes. It's always him visiting me and he always feels a need to be the one to be proactive about it. But how do I say I can do stuff, too, without feeling like…? Because I feel like if he hasn't thought of that, then maybe he's not interested in me doing it. I don't know.

Matthew: Do you still want me or expect me to believe he's the guy for you?

Attendee: Yeah.

Matthew: You do?

Attendee: Yeah.

Matthew: Why?

Matthew: I really value your time. More than you know, I value your time, and I am concerned that he's wasting it. That doesn't mean you don't have this incredible connection. What I don't like or appreciate

is his – and credit to him for being honest – assertion that you're not a priority. When he says you should explore the other opportunities, I feel like he's told you to go and do your thing, and right now, you're deciding not to listen.

Attendee: No. It's not that I'm not dating anyone else or go on dates. I want to be with him. I don't want anyone else.

Matthew: You want to be with him?

Attendee: Yeah.

Matthew: Yes. But you're in a classic scenario here where you won't meet another guy who you like so long as you're investing all of your emotional energy in to him. You may convince yourself right now that you're doing both.

Attendee: No. I do think about that. I worry about that.

Matthew: You may go on a handful of dates but you know the chances are… There's a common phenomenon when people break up. It's a very depressing time after a breakup. It's when you first start dating people and you are so unbelievably depressed and melancholy about how awful these people seem in comparison to the person who you just lost.

Now, a friend said something really smart to me, because I had this exact same feeling. I came out of a breakup and I was complaining. I said, "I'm meeting all these people and they're not half the person that this person was," and I was so depressed about it.

He said, "Dude, you can't compare someone you've just met to someone you've built a connection with for two years. There are plenty of people who if you started now and connected with them for two years, would actually seem much better than you're giving them credit for. But these people don't stand a chance because you're taking them after five minutes and comparing them to someone who has taken root in your life for two years. That's not a fair test. You can't do that. It's not even a fair comparison."

Right now, the tough part for you is chances are no one will match up because your head is still there with that person, and the decision that you will have to make at some point, whether you choose to make it now or not, is “Is it healthy for me to continue to see this person, knowing that they’re not moving or budging?”

Attendee: We haven’t spoken since then. It’s been two weeks.

Matthew: Okay. “Is it healthy, or do I need to make a clean break and actually give myself a fair chance to meet somebody else and allow me to emotionally distance myself from this person?” Because every time you see them or speak to them, they’ll take hold again, and you’ll never be able to go and do your own thing. In other words, it’s incredibly unlikely that anything good is going to happen in your love life whilst you’re still seeing this person. That’s why I worry that this man is wasting your time.

Now, if he was saying to you, “I need you to come to me this many times a month and I’m going to come to you this many times, and between us, we’re going to figure this out,” I would say, “Fair enough,” but he’s not saying that.

When he says, “I think you should explore other opportunities,” I think we have to take him at his word that he means that and not try to analyze a level deeper where we say, “But maybe what he really means is I should try harder.”

Attendee: No. That wasn’t necessarily what I was saying. I guess I was just… I’ve been in a situation before, but I’m really good at being like, “Okay, shut down, move on,” and I’m trying to be more open, and I’m trying to…

Matthew: You’ve been open. By the way, you can’t be more open than saying, “If he asked me to do more, I would do it.”

Attendee: Right. Okay.

Matthew: I think you just really want to be with him.

Attendee: Yeah, I know. But take him out of the equation.

Matthew: Thank you. I would love to.

Attendee: Take him out of the equation, and just how can I convey that I want to be more proactive without seeming like I'm…?

Matthew: I would say this. I would say, "I have really strong feelings for you and there is a lot that I would do to make this work – even more than I'm doing now – but I respect myself too much and my time too much than to try to do that without feeling that you want that, too. If you told me that you're interested in making this something more… Because this isn't a game to me, this is my life, and I'm a great person to be with."

"If you're interested in making this something more with me as a team, then I can be an amazing team player in making this work. I can respect the things you have to do, the people you have to look after, the job you have to perform, and be a partner in crime with you. But I won't do that without knowing from your side that you actually want me to put in more effort, because I'm not one of those women. My time is precious and I believe in living at the highest level and I want to do whatever I do well, and right now this relationship, whatever it is, we're not doing well; we're doing it at half speed."

"You don't have to tell me this second because I'm not interested in putting you in some bind here, some ultimatum, but I need to get on with living my life if you're not in the same place as me. Of course, I wouldn't be saying any of this if I didn't think you were incredible as a man, because you are."

And I wouldn't wait for a response; I would then get on with the process of living my life.

Can we make a deal that that allows you to get the clarity you need whilst also now pursuing your life and knowing that if this man decides of his own volition that this is what he wants, he'll deal with it, he'll come get you? We can agree on that? Okay. Good. Then I don't need to be right. He'll tell us either way.

Attendee: Okay. Exactly.

Matthew: All right. Beautiful.

Attendee: Then I guess that brings me to the second part. I guess what Jennifer was talking about, that was actually the second part of my question, but unlike Jennifer, I don't go on a lot of dates. I do try. I have my regular viewing parties that I do, and I try to make the most of the in between times, and I try to go out and be social, but I don't necessarily meet a lot of guys to go out with. But the ones that I do, when I do go out with men, I do have a pretty good connection. But then it never results in commitment.

I think that I have a problem with perceived challenge.

Matthew: My instinct with you is that you're not setting it out early on that there's a certain path that someone would need to go down with you.

Attendee: Yeah.

Matthew: This is what it comes down to, really. You're always just putting yourself in one of a few boxes to somebody else, depending on the things you say. The moment a woman says to you early on, "I'm not the type to sleep around," instantly you have it in your head that "Oh wow, this might be someone I might have to commit to more."

When in casual conversation over a date, she says, "I know a lot of my friends, they'll just go home with someone or have fun with them. I don't know. To me, I'm not in that stage of my life. Casual sex is easy, but finding an actual connection with someone who you care about is to me much more important."

You could say that on a date in casual conversation and you haven't said to him, "Are you looking for a relationship?" Instead, all you've said is, "This is my standard."

Attendee: I just had a date on Thursday. I said those exact words. He was constantly trying to get me to go up to his apartment.

Matthew: That's great.

Attendee: How many times did I need to say to him…? I don't even know why I said it. Maybe that was one of the things that you taught us.

Matthew: Whatever. I'll say this. Never complain about someone wanting to have sex with you.

Attendee: He even said to me, "Did I say sex? We could have coffee, tea." He's offering me all these beverages, and I'm thinking, "Just go out there."

Matthew: Trust me when I say the alternative problem is worse. This is a good problem.

Attendee: Okay.

Matthew: You may tell me you're not the type to sleep around; it doesn't change how horny I am.

Attendee: I understand, but it was a first date, though.

Matthew: Sure. By the way, he may be disqualifying himself at the stage where he's too persistent. That's also true. When he starts to get too persistent, you may get to a point where you say, "Now you're becoming less attractive," because it then shows a little too much desperation on his part. But that's his problem.

That has nothing to do, by the way, with, "Did I not communicate it clearly enough?" When women say this to me, I always say the same thing. "Don't worry if people are trying to have sex with you. This is a good thing. Be happy about that one."

You can still slow a guy down. When people say, "He thinks I'm easy," no, at the point where you say no, he doesn't think you're easy. If you don't want to do that. If you're saying to him, "Listen, I'm with you, I'm wanting to but I just can't," and if a guy was persisting, persisting, persisting, that would be the point where I say, "I really have to go but maybe we'll hang out another time so long as you don't ask me this many times to have sex with you."

In every early interaction, you're always categorizing yourself. Men can't categorize you; you can only do that to yourself. If you describe your standards, your ideas on relationships and things like that in a way that makes it clear that you're looking for something more, i.e. by saying, "Most of friends just kind of sleep around. That's really not me, I don't really get that. It doesn't do anything for me. That's not my style," already, I'm telling you that this isn't going to be some casual thing. I don't even have to say it explicitly; I just happen to be telling you about my personality in this moment.

Things like that are important, but by the way, it's also very important to couple that with desire. It's also very important. Any woman I've been with that has really successfully done this, even though they say those things, they still couple it with a high degree of sexuality.

How does one do that? That sounds difficult. It's really not. It just is about telling someone how much you want them, how sexually attracted to them you are – when you kiss them, you can still kiss them as if you're making love to them – and showing them you are a sexual being; you're just not someone who's quick to act on it with somebody.

Don't beat yourself up. For you, it doesn't sound like we're talking about a large amount of people, because you said yourself, you're not going on a lot of dates, right?

Attendee: No. And it doesn't necessarily get to that. I think I'm pretty good at establishing standards, but I feel like maybe I'm too accessible.

Matthew: I think you're too nice. I think you need to tease him more and mess around with him.

Attendee: I'm getting better. I am learning from you, but it is hard for me because I'm always worried I'm going to hurt someone's feelings.

Matthew: Stop that. Stop worrying about that. Offend away. You must offend. It's important. The most interesting thing about my YouTube channel is that it offends a lot of people. I can tell you now

I'm a very kind person but I love offending. I get a lot of satisfaction from it.

Attendee: Have you always been that way, or is it only since the YouTube…?

Matthew: No. I like disagreement. I like debate. I enjoy when people get riled up. To me, that's where the fun begins.

Attendee: That makes me really uncomfortable.

Matthew: It mustn't.

Attendee: Offended I'm going to be and that kind of stuff.

Matthew: Go on, please.

Attendee: I guess that's my tweak. Is that what you're saying? After 37 years, just not offending people is keeping me single?

Matthew: Maybe I should phrase it differently. I would not have you go out and offend as many people as possible, but I think you will become much more interesting when you stop trying to please. You'll become much more interesting when you voice opinions without worrying whether they might offend or not.

When I say I like offending, I don't literally mean I like offending people. What I really mean is I love having opinions that divide. I do enjoy it. By the way, it's never stopped me from getting that person's attraction, I can tell you that. If anything, it speeds it up. If we're on a date and you disagree with me, we'll probably end up having sex quicker. Attraction is very strange.

Attraction very often is more about breaking rapport than building rapport. Because what did I say? When I said to that bartender, "I don't want anything from you for the rest of my life," that wasn't me building rapport; I was breaking rapport. And in breaking rapport, she realized that I wasn't afraid of her, and that's when we get attraction.

By the way, you can always break rapport with a wink. And I do. Of course, when I bitch about star signs on stage, I do it with a wink. They know I'm not lying, but I do it with a wink. There's a way that I get away with it. There's a lot I say on stage that has the potential to upset people. I curse a lot, I poke fun of the audience, but I also poke fun of myself, and I also say things with a wink. I don't take myself too seriously. Because of that, it creates that nice, unique pairing – again, unique pairing.

You're a kind person. You're never going to not be a kind person, so don't worry about it. But at the same time, don't be afraid to enjoy being a little bit more vocal about your opinions. People will see your character more. I know you have them and I know that the nice thing is bullshit half the time because you do have these opinions.

I just want to hear them more, and it's going to make you more interesting and it's going to make men more interested in you, because they'll actually see your character instead of nice Liezel who's on a date with me who says lots of nice things.

I'm just waiting for you to say something mean about me. I feel like I'm the first person you're going to take this out on.

Okay. Let me put it back on you guys. I have done a lot of talking but I want to hear your feedback. Did you like today? Did you find it useful? Is it different or unique? Did we achieve our goal? I would love to hear from you guys.

Attendee: I felt like there were a lot of practical direct answers to things that all of us have going on that could also be applied to other people. YouTube is vague and the advice you give us could be broad spectrum. It's great and it's really appreciated, but today was also really nice.

Matthew: That's fantastic.

Attendee: One of the things I wanted to say – and I shared this with some of the ladies during the break – is that when I spoke at the Retreat, I found a couple of women who were at the Retreat who

could relate to what I was going through, but what I found, which was really unbelievable, which I had found out since the Retreat is that people come up to me now who may or may not have had a disability, may or may not be going through what they're going through, but they're divorced, the fact that they're single with five kids, or whatever it is that they are going through, they see me as being some platform for them, and it's just amazing to me.

One of the reasons I wanted to come today is because my story can be relatable not just in somebody that has the same thing that I have… And you telling me that I'm arrogant is just an eye-opening thing. I will take that away and put that up on my mirror and look at it.

Matthew: I love that.

Attendee: I thank you for that from the bottom of my heart.

Matthew: You're welcome. How about you guys?

Attendee: I feel extremely privileged to be here and for all of us to be in the space and be able to comfortably share, and even take something that's very personal, and to have you be able to give us feedback on something very personal but I'm sure happens to everybody. It's funny that two of us are sitting here and we have completely opposite, almost yin-yang experiences, but then almost you can connect them both and be like almost like a swip-swap kind of thing.

I'm not trying to make it about me, I'm just trying to say I appreciate it greatly. I know that we're all here for a very common purpose, that we all look up to you and we look up to your word and like what you say. And a lot of us have been following you for a long time, so I know for me it's extremely special and so I thank you.

Matthew: Thank you. That's very, very sweet of you. Thank you.

I have had so much fun with you guys. This has really been special. I haven't had the opportunity to do anything like this for actually years, I think. I think it has been years since I've done anything like this, anything so intimate. It's been so much fun to actually coach again in this way, really get into these issues in this way. We do it

on the Retreat programs, but it's just been so much fun to have a handful of you guys in a room and target these things.

I want to thank you for being so open, because you guys have made it. I really couldn't have done this if you guys weren't honest and weren't open, and you were so open and honest, and that's a privilege for me.

We tried to find people we thought would share really interesting thoughts and points of view. We had a lot of people who applied to be in this room, and we wanted people who had real interesting points of view and we thought would be honest and we thought would actually share with us, and you all did. None of you held back. I really appreciate you for that, and I think everyone else will really appreciate it, too. So thank you, guys.

I think with that, we can eat and have a drink. It's Saturday evening, after all. It's the cocktail hour. We'll have a good time together.